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MEMOIR OF MR. JOHN VICKERS,

LATE A STUDENT AT STEPNEY.

(Continued from page 406.)

"BLESSED are the dead who die in the Lord."—From himself I have endeavoured to give a mere outline of the life and character of this amiable young man; aiming to keep in view what appears to have been uppermost in his own mind, and that habitually so, *viz.* the riches and sovereignty of the grace of Christ, and the glory of God, in his own salvation; together with the strong obligations, under which, by these, he felt himself bound to seek the display of them in the salvation of his fellow sinners; and, in all respects, to live, not to himself, but to Jesus, who had lived and died for him!

To what I have said of the conduct and character of Mr. Vickers, I am happy to add the testimonials of his much-respected theological tutor, and one of his fellow students. The former writes thus:—"Every one in this house loved Mr. Vickers. His fellow students will never forget him. For myself, I shall always remember him with pleasure; a pleasure mingled with regret, that he was so soon taken away from us. But God is wise! and it becomes us to bow, with the profoundest reverence, to his dispensations, when we cannot at all comprehend them."

The most prominent features of his character, in my view, were the kindness and mildness of his disposition, and the serene cheerfulness of his native temper, which, by habitual prayer, watchfulness, and Christian prudence, contributed to preserve him from almost every thing that could offend, or suggest the most distant idea of insincerity. Negative virtues these, which, in our lapsed state, are of no small value to the professor, and especially in the ministry of Christ. The apostle reminds the Thessalonians, how "*unblamably*" he and his brethren had behaved themselves among them.

From what I saw in him, I should argue strongly for the Institution wherein he entered on a course of academical studies; for I am fully persuaded, that, if he had not been classed

with others, he would never have acquired so large a portion of theological knowledge as he certainly did. If he had been shut up in seclusion, a mere solitary student, he would not have felt that powerful excitement, which brought all the energies of his mind into full exertion.

Mr. Jones, a fellow student with Mr. Vickers, who entered the academy with him, a member of the same church, and his bosom friend, writes of him thus:—"The excellency of his character did not consist so much in a striking display of any one quality, as in the combination of several good qualities. He entertained a deep sense of the depravity of his nature, and the absolute importance of personal religion, accompanied with the most ardent desire of doing good to his fellow creatures. He was also unremittingly attentive to those means, that were calculated to promote the life of religion in his own soul, as well as those that were calculated to prepare him for the due discharge of the ministerial duties. He proceeded with such regularity, as not to suffer his literary pursuits to interfere with his devotional exercises. His taste for learning preserved him from indolence and fickleness; and his conviction of the importance of the ministry, led him to the full determination of spending, (should his life be spared, and his health continued,) the whole of the time allotted for his stay at Stepney, in the pursuit of useful knowledge. On the other hand, his taste for devotion moderated his desires and expectations as a scholar. He aimed at *good* rather than *great* things. Whenever he referred to the time when he hoped to be regularly engaged in preaching the gospel, he seldom spoke of his classical or mathematical studies, though he had a taste for these, and undoubtedly would have pursued them; but he often said, that, should his life be spared, he intended to spend much of his time in reading the scriptures in their original languages. The Bible was the book of books in his esteem.

"He was generally happy.—His being preserved from backsliding, his regularity in his attendance on the means of grace, both public and private, greatly contributed to produce a very striking uniformity in his experience. His confidence toward God, arose from his reliance on the promises of the gospel; and he relied on those promises, not as detached from the precepts, but as forming *part* of a *whole*.

"His letters to the committee of the Baptist Academical Institution, abundantly proved, that he esteemed his tutors, that he loved his fellow students, and that he was sensible of his obligations to the supporters of that Institution. I have often admired the fervour with which he used to pray in our weekly meetings of prayer; for all connected with it, as well as for the Redeemer's cause in general."

Not satisfied with what was merely negative, my friend so attended to "things that were

lovely, and of good report," as thereby to adorn his profession, and, by his example, to benefit others. From his journal it appears, that for this he both laboured and prayed. God answered his prayers, and crowned his labours with a success, which he did not expect. Seeking to approve himself to God, he so obtained the approbation, and excited the praises of men, as to be thought worthy of imitation by others, whose station in life is similar to what his was. His next concern was, to be useful in his ministerial profession. Far from thinking highly of himself, he laboured, perhaps with undue ardour, to improve the talents committed to him; and the result was, that he bid very fair to be an able and a useful preacher. The last discourse he gave us, at Devonshire-square, was upon heaven, as a *nightless* state, (Rev. xxii. 5.) and which, under four particulars, he discussed in a very edifying manner. His state of health, and appearance, were such, that some of the hearers then expected, it would be no long time before he would himself enter upon that state, and which has proved to be the case.

Though "taken away in the midst of his days," he will still continue to be useful, if, "being dead, he should yet speak," by his example, to his surviving companions, and, by this little memorial of him, to those young men who may hereafter succeed to the station which he occupied at Stepney. Modest humble man! little didst thou think, that the friends and patrons of that Institution, who watch over its prosperity with parental tenderness and anxiety, should entertain a serious concern, that, in so many particulars, the present and future students should copy thy example!

Without knowing, to this day, from whose pen it proceeded, I could not but be struck with the approximation, in some particulars, of our deceased friend, to the characters described by the committee, in their address to the public, as follows:

"The committee request, not only your subscriptions and your influence, but also your prayers and your counsels.—They earnestly invite your co-operation; and desire your jealous care, in selecting and recommending to the Institution, those 'in whom the Spirit of God is.' They are not so much concerned, that they should be prodigies in mental abilities, as that they should be persons animated with the love of Christ—filled with tender compassion for perishing sinners—hungering and thirsting for the truth—men of superior self-denial—dead to the honours, profits, and pleasures of the world—patient of discipline—meek and lowly in heart—in a word, bearing the image of the divine Saviour. May a goodly number of such men be the pillars and ornaments of our denomination, when our heads are laid in the dust!"

Perhaps the majority of readers would have been more gratified, and considered this account more edifying to others, if, as life drew to a close, Mr. Vickers had been so absorbed

in heavenly objects, and his enjoyments so ravishing, as not only to raise him superior to the fear of death, but to inspire him with such ardent longings after heaven, as should obliterate from his mind all thought and all concern about the present state. Now, I confess, I am better pleased with that state of mind, under which my friend gradually descended to the grave, or, rather, ascended into heaven. To serve God, in the gospel of his dear Son, was the object of his ambition, and that upon which his heart had been set for some years. For the ends he had in view, and the motives by which he was influenced, he could solemnly appeal to the Searcher of hearts. In the application to give his talents a right direction, and to "stir up the gift that was in him," he had laboured with diligence and perseverance. Contemplating the moral state of the world, he saw the "fields white for harvest," and, with his sickle in his hand, entered the service of his Lord and Master; which service he esteemed his honour and his happiness. Therefore, to be so soon called off from that, in which his heart was so engaged, must have been to him that which he could not himself have desired; yet, when he found it to be the will of his divine Master, he silently bowed submission, and retired.

Certain it is, that the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls is not only with his people, in passing through the valley of the shadow of death, to protect them from evil; but that he does, sometimes, so manifest his glory to them, as makes them "long to languish into life:" yet, I have generally observed, that those who have appeared to be most uniformly spiritually-minded in the course of their lives, when they have drawn near to death, have seldom reached those ecstacies, with which some obituaries abound. I do not remember to have seen it printed, but have been informed, that when Mr. Booth was supposed to be dying, and being inquired of, by a friend, as to the state of his mind, his reply was to the following effect:—"I have no great joys, nor am I solicitous for them; these are reserved for a future state; but,

> The gospel bears my spirits up;
> A faithful and unchanging God
> Lays the foundation for my hope,
> In oaths, and promises, and blood!"

This is to enjoy "the peace of God which passeth all understanding;" and this peace Brother Vickers enjoyed!

"Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright! for the end of that man is *peace!*"

Islington. TIM. THOMAS.

THE NECESSITY OF *FARTHER ENDEAVOURS* FOR THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL IN LONDON.

LETTER I.

TO A YOUNG MINISTER.

MY DEAR SIR,

I THANK you for your kind letter, not only on account of

the expressions of respect and affection, it contains, to which if I were insensible, I should subject myself to severe censure, but also as it affords me an opportunity of opening my heart to you on those things which relate to your present situation, and on which you have condescended to ask my advice.

You are now situate in London. *A London minister* is in a station of singular importance; and if he fill up that station well, he is a character truly respectable; if otherwise, the importance of his situation will tend, in an equal degree, to render him disreputable. I am anxious you should support that character, and add dignity to it, while it distinguishes you.

I will not detain your attention by dwelling upon the requisite qualifications for the ministerial office in general. Of these you have often heard, have often considered, and have, in a happy degree, already exemplified. I will content myself with insisting on such considerations relative to the peculiarity of your situation in the metropolis, as may occur to my thoughts, and which appear calculated, in my opinion, to subserve your real advantage, and more extensive usefulness.

1. *You must consider yourself the servant of Jesus Christ in London, as much as if you were in the meanest village in the kingdom.*—You are to pursue the objects *he* has set before you; to act by the directions *he* has given you; and to be influenced by the considerations and motives *he* has furnished. It is more especially requisite to have this impressed upon your mind, in a situation where such a variety of objects present themselves as are perpetually recurring in London. The great veneration almost unavoidably attached to wealth, to gentility, and to long-continued and extensive influence in some of your hearers, or members, may, without any wish or apprehension on their part, tend insensibly to lead you to forget the supreme regard you owe to your divine Master, and to think you have acquitted yourself well if you have given satisfaction to your immediate religious connexions. Respect such persons highly; give them no unnecessary cause of offence; imitate and cherish all that is excellent in them; but do not regard their sentiments as the measure of your duty. If so, your views will soon become contracted, you will be their dependent, and may soon experience the effects of a tyranny you have tempted them to exercise. Take the measure of your duty from the command of your Lord, and be no farther the servant of the richest, wisest, and best of men, than is consistent with your supreme regard to Jesus Christ. In nothing be their *servant* but for "Jesus' sake."

2. *Seriously consider the vast importance of your situation.*—London, with its environs, is, if I mistake not, said to contain a population of *one million two hundred thousand souls!* the largest population of any spot of equal extent, perhaps, on the surface of the globe. The thought, when properly

realized, overwhelms the mind. What crowds are every day, yea, every hour, passing into the unseen world! What a glorious opportunity for a minister of Christ to signalize himself as the friend of immortal souls! What an awful responsibility attaches to him! And what accumulated guilt will fall upon him, if he be indeed chargeable with treachery or sloth! "If he fail to deliver such as are drawn forth unto death, and such as are delivered to be slain," when he sees, or may see, the prodigious multitudes on either hand in this melancholy situation, his guilt will be aggravated in a degree beyond the power of language to express; he will be accessary to the murder of souls by thousands.

3. *Reflect upon the actual state of religion amongst this vast multitude.*—Are the majority, or any tolerable proportion of them, truly converted to God, and travelling towards heaven? I am free to acknowledge, that there is in the metropolis a large number of places, in which the gospel is faithfully and zealously preached, and a numerous body of persons who embrace and profess it. Of that number not a few, of every denomination, do very great honour to the Christian name. They have set on foot many excellent institutions for promoting the temporal and eternal welfare of men; and have also warmly encouraged and supported institutions of a similar nature, established by others in different parts of the kingdom. They have come forward with their property with an unexampled generosity; and, what is to many of still more importance, they have employed a considerable portion of their time and personal exertions in the cause of benevolence and piety. Every part of the United Kingdom, India, Africa, and the most distant islands, have reaped the fruits of their pious zeal. The memorial of their kindness is engraven on the hearts of thousands, and will not be erased from the annals of heaven. But still the question recurs: "In what proportion, among this immense mass of population, may we suppose true religion exists?" Now, in reference to this inquiry, I suppose, it will be scarcely admitted, that it is found among such as are habitually the neglectors of evangelical worship. Surely, such as either totally neglect the worship of God, or attend to what passes for his worship in a manner opposite to the direction and spirit of the gospel, cannot be supposed to be religious. But how prodigiously numerous are persons of this description! I am not in possession of documents sufficient to enable me to form any thing like an accurate estimate of the number of places of worship in London and its environs; but I can scarcely think, that, of all denominations, they would amount to one thousand. But supposing they were to exceed that number; yet, when it is recollected, that in at least half of these, the gospel is not, probably, preached; and, in a considerable portion of those in

which it is preached, the congregations are far from being large:—it will appear, that of those who attend upon evangelical worship; not to say, those who among them truly worship God in spirit and in truth, who are a still smaller number, the proportion is exceedingly small. Can we rationally conclude, that the aggregate of such amounts to two hundred thousand? If so, we shall leave a million, or, even after the deduction of such, as from their age or infirmities, are incapable of attending on religious worship, several hundred thousands, who are, beyond all dispute, living like heathens; and, though bearing the Christian name, "without God in the world." Has this fact been sufficiently attended to? If it had, would not the ministers and friends of religion, while they are laudably exerting themselves for the benefit of their fellow-creatures abroad, as well as in the different parts of our own island, exert themselves with much more vigour for the thousands within the limits of the city in which they reside, and who are daily within their ken? I recollect being told of a zealous clergyman, when preaching in the precincts of a celebrated university, not long after the present missionary efforts had commenced, who, when noticing and applauding those efforts, added, "I wish a society were formed for the purpose of sending a mission to ——." I can really scarce refrain from a similar wish respecting *London*. Surely, its claims are as great as those of almost any part of the world; and, urged by the obligations of gratitude and near relationship, which elsewhere have no existence, are abundantly more forcible! Ought not something to be attempted, and that with a seriousness, vigour, and perseverance proportioned to the importance of the object itself? It ought to be matter of serious deliberation, and most earnest prayer, to find out some hitherto untried, or, if not wholly untried, yet much neglected, method of endeavouring to rescue some of these immortals from ignorance, vice, and death! Do not think, my dear sir, that this business belongs not to you. If you suppose this, I would appeal to your conscience, in the language of a most interesting passage of scripture, already referred to, "Doth not he that pondereth the heart regard it; and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know? And will he not render to every man according to his works?" It certainly is your business; it is the business of every one who sustains the character of a minister, to do every thing in his power to save souls. If he neglect it, he will incur the threatening denounced against the unfaithful watchman; the blood of souls will be required at his hands. "Arise, for this matter belongeth to *thee;* be of good courage, and do it."

In my next, I shall point out to your attention, some of the means you may adopt to promote the spiritual interests of this vast multitude of perishing immortals. Yours, &c.

PHILO LONDINENSIS.

ON SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION.

It requires but little acquaintance with the religious world, fully to understand, that the conversation of many professors of religion is as carnal and worldly as that of persons who make no profession at all. This must grieve the minds of good men, because, on this account, religion often suffers in the estimation of those who are unacquainted with its native beauty and excellence.

This evil does not stop here; the same spirit too generally prevails even among the members of Christian churches; and it does not unfrequently happen, that those who have made the most solemn avowal of being the disciples of Jesus Christ, are not distinguished from others by their speech being good "to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers." It is not an indiscriminate conversation that we wish to recommend. Many truths and many instances of the Lord's goodness to his people, which afford matter of comfort and ground of encouragement to those who feel the influence of those truths, and experience that goodness, may not be proper subjects of communication to those who are strangers to the power of godliness.

But, while we ought to be careful, lest, by an injudicious discussion of divine things, religion should suffer, we should also take heed that our discourse be congenial to its holy nature, and that we lose no opportunity which fairly offers itself to speak to the glory of God, our own comfort, or the edification of others. The gift of speech is a noble faculty, and was, doubtless, intended, by our Creator, to be used to the best of purposes. Yet, in the use of it, I presume, most of us must acknowledge we are guilty; not having kept our tongues from evil, nor our lips from speaking guile. It is a serious and humbling consideration, that our nature should be so far fallen from God as to dishonour him so much by the tongue, which, when rightly employed, is one of the distinguishing glories of man. But though this is the case with those who are not renewed in the spirit of their minds, it should be far different with such as are taught by divine grace, not to yield their "members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin."

Religion supposes a warm attachment to Christ and his cause. The love of God shed abroad in the heart is the predominant principle. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak. A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things." The name of the Saviour, and redemption through his blood, will be delightful subjects of conversation to such a man. Though other things require our attention, and must, from circumstances, frequently be subjects of discourse, yet the doctrines, precepts, and promises of our holy religion will be our most animating and delightful themes.

It is highly proper it should be so. When we reflect upon the everlasting love of God displayed in the gift of his Son, to recover us from our fallen state—upon the sorrows and sufferings through which the Redeemer passed in order to accomplish that recovery—upon the love of the eternal spirit in enlightening our understandings, subduing our wills, and applying the blessings of redemption to our souls; how is it possible we should either think or speak of such infinitely great and glorious favours, without a peculiar glow of affection? We are hastening to the house of our Father, where we shall enjoy the felicity of the Divine Presence, and behold the infinite excellencies and eternal glories of the blessed Immanuel.

Do not children, on their journey home, frequently speak of their father's house, and of the pleasure they expect to enjoy there; and should not Christians often speak of that incorruptible and undefiled inheritance which awaits their possession? In this state, however, the things of time are apt to engross our thoughts, and to gain so much of our attention, that, in some instances, it seems as though our high birth and exalted privileges, as Christians, had either escaped our thoughts, or lost their power to engage our affection.

I am fully persuaded, that a little reflection will convince most of us, that we feel a considerable degree of cold indifference towards heavenly and divine things. There was a time, when we could scarcely think or speak of any thing but Christ and his great salvation. Religion was alive within us, and we were ready to say, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul." Psalm lxvi. 16. But is it so with us now? We feel our backwardness, we seem to mourn over our languid frame, saying, "O that it were with us as in months past!" But why this change? Is not the Lord still the same, and does not his faithfulness and truth continue to afford ground of comfort and joy to his people?

We should never want subjects for conversation were we heavenly in our meditations, and holy in our desires; we should frequently recollect the nature and consequences of sin; the pity and compassion of the Lord towards us while we were living in ignorance and rebellion; the nature of that state from which we have been delivered by divine grace, and the glorious hope which the gospel gives to those who believe in Jesus Christ. Shall we, who have been bought at the inestimable price of the Saviour's blood, be silent in his praise? God forbid! "Bless the Lord, O our souls! and all that is within us, bless his holy name." Psalm ciii. 2. But if our hearts have been divided between God and the world, and earthly things have had too great a share of our affection, it is no wonder if our conversation has become worldly. We frequently lose the relish for spiritual converse in the dust and bustle of this life.

We should also beware lest we suffer by light and vain conversation. Foolish talking and jesting are not convenient for the people of God. Eph. v. 4. Not suitable to their characters as saints, nor agreeable to the divine will. There are few things more unprofitable to Christians than vain and idle discourse; it unfits the mind for pious reflection and religious exercises: it produces a barrenness of soul which a good man must lament. We should, therefore, take heed to our ways, that, in this respect, we sin not with our tongues. "If any man seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." James, i. 26.

Contentious and angry talkers, in refraining from this practice, would find the saying of the wise man true, "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles." Prov. xxi. 23. We may speak to display our wit at the expense of our comfort, and a single word may cause us hours of uneasiness. "*The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity.*" It will readily be confessed by all those who feel the depravity of human nature, that great wisdom and prudence are necessary to order our conversation in a suitable manner.

True piety, a familiar acquaintance with the word of God, and a proper attention to passing circumstances, would enable us to speak to edification. Our minds and memories, judgments and affections, would, in time, become storehouses of spiritual things, furnishing us with useful remarks; so that our conversation would be made up of words fitly spoken, which are as apples of gold in pictures of silver.

Dereham. GREEN.

REMARKS ON NUMBERS, XVI. 38, &c.

In connexion with a late Review in this Magazine, of a Publication entitled Eugenio and Epenetus, or, Conversations on Infant Baptism.

To the Editors of the Baptist Magazine.

I HAVE every reason to be satisfied with the manner in which you speak of my publication in general. I could have wished, however, that you had entered a little more particularly into the statement of the argument contained in the second conversation. There is a view there given of the import of circumcision as a *seal of the righteousness of faith*, which is not, at least, that usually taken of it in the discussions respecting infant baptism. It was, in a good measure, new to myself when it occurred to me on examining this subject; at least, if I had seen it before hinted at, I had never seen it followed out to its consequences, and, in this way, it had escaped my notice. It was chiefly to have the view suggested of this part of the argument fully examined, that I thought of publishing at all on this controversy. I had always before found myself embarrassed with the argument in support of infant baptism, derived from the analogy between baptism and circumcision. I

never was satisfied with the common method of getting quit of that argument by explaining away, in a considerable degree, the spiritual nature of the covenant with Abraham, and making circumcision chiefly refer to a right to the land of Canaan. But, if the interpretation I have given of circumcision, as styled a seal of the righteousness of faith, be found, on examination, to be tenable, while it secures the spiritual view of the Abrahamic covenant, it will, at the same time, I am persuaded, tend most effectually to destroy the argument which has been so often and so strenuously urged in support of infant baptism, from the analogy it is supposed to bear to circumcision.

It is from having lately discovered a striking illustration and confirmation of this part of my argument on the passage in the book of Numbers abovementioned, that I now request your attention to it. Permit me, however, first, to remind you, and your readers, of that particular view of circumcision which, I conceive it fitted to illustrate and confirm.

I remark, in general, then, that when circumcision is called a seal of the righteousness of faith, there are two senses in which the expression is capable of being understood.

First, It may be understood as implying, that certain blessings are sealed to *the individual* partaking of this rite; or,

Second, That it is merely a seal, confirmation, or memorial of *a general truth*, that whosoever believeth as Abraham did, his faith will be counted to him for righteousness.

The former is the common view taken of this subject, and that on which the supposed analogy between circumcision and baptism is founded. In the conversations above-mentioned, I state what appear to me insuperable objections to this interpretation, and my reasons for decidedly preferring the other, which represents circumcision as a seal or memorial of a general truth.

In opposition to the first interpretation, I remark, *first*, that, if circumcision be viewed as sealing something to the individual, it is extremely difficult to see what it sealed, or that it sealed any thing to all those called to receive it. Here I show, that in many cases it cannot be viewed as sealing to the individual, either temporal or spiritual blessings.

A *second* argument against this interpretation is, that it does not appear, that even where adults were called to submit to circumcision, a profession of faith was necessary to their receiving it. Here I endeavour to prove, by a variety of passages, that if any slave, for example, refused to submit to circumcision, he was liable *to be put to death*; and that this is the import of the uncircumcised soul being cut off from the people.

A *third* objection to supposing it sealed something to the individual, is derived from the case of Ishmael. Though he was expressly called to be circumcised, it was as expressly

declared, that the covenant, of which this rite was the token, was not to be made with him but with Isaac. What, then, could it be considered as sealing to Ishmael?

If, on the other hand, we view circumcision as a seal of the *general truth*, that whosoever believeth, his faith is imputed to him for righteousness; the difficulties which embarrass the subject on the other interpretation, are completely done away.

First, As a seal of general truth, there is no difficulty arising from the various classes to be circumcised. As a seal, in this sense, it was equally efficacious in the body of an infant, or a slave, as in that of Abraham himself.

Second, This interpretation best accords with the scope of Paul's reasoning, Rom. iv. It is there plainly his design to show, that faith is necessary to justification, both in Jew and Gentile. But this can only be maintained by viewing circumcision as a seal of this truth, that whosoever believes as Abraham did, shall be justified. If it be viewed as sealing something to the individuals circumcised, as most of these were infants, it would rather show that faith was not necessary to the enjoyment of the blessing of which circumcision was the seal, as on this supposition, the blessing was enjoyed by those quite incapable of exercising faith.

Third, I show that this view of the expression best accords with Abraham's history. But, for the particular illustration of these remarks, I must refer you to the volume itself.

While circumcision is called, in one place, a *seal* of the righteousness of faith, it is called elsewhere a *token* of God's covenant. I show with what propriety these expressions are applied to the same object, and how completely they harmonize, if the former expression be understood, as a seal of the general truth, that whosoever believeth, his faith shall be counted to him for righteousness.

It is in connexion with this remark, I request your attention to Numb. xvi. 38. "The censers of these sinners against their own souls, let them make them broad plates for a covering of the altar; for they offered them before the Lord, therefore they are hallowed: and they shall be a sign unto the children of Israel." We have here an example of the same word which is applied to circumcision, when it is called the *token* of God's covenant. Now if it appear that what is here called a *sign* or *token*, is an *exhibition or memorial of a certain truth, by means of its recalling to men's recollection the origin of the event, or institution, to which the name of token or sign is given*, it will tend considerably to confirm the view I have given of circumcision when called a token of God's covenant, or, in other words, a seal of the righteousness of faith, *viz.* that it becomes so, as being a confirmation or memorial of a certain truth by the origin of the institution being recollected.

The incident contained in the immediately preceding part of the Jewish history is shortly this: Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, with two hundred and fifty of the princes, became jealous of Moses and Aaron, and thus provoked the Lord. To decide this contest for the superiority between these rebels and the appointed servants of Jehovah, they were called to take every man his censer, and to put incense therein, and the Lord would declare who were his. The ringleaders and their families were destroyed by the earth opening and swallowing them up, and the two hundred and fifty princes were consumed by fire from heaven. Then it is said, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, that he take up the censers out of the burning, and scatter thou the fire yonder; for they are hallowed. The censers of these sinners against their own souls, let them make them broad plates for a covering of the altar; for they offered them before the Lord, therefore they are hallowed: and they shall be a sign unto the children of Israel. And Eleazar the priest took the brazen censers, wherewith they that were burnt had offered; and they were made broad plates for a covering of the altar, to be a memorial unto the children of Israel, that no stranger which is not of the seed of Aaron, come near to offer incense before the Lord, that he be not as Korah, and as his company; as the Lord said to him by the hand of Moses," ver. 36—40.

Now here you will remark, first, the word rendered *sign*, (and in ver. 20, the word 'memorial' is applied to the same object) is the same word that is applied in Gen. xvii. to circumcision, when it is called the *token* of God's covenant. This observation is applicable both to the original Hebrew and to the lxx translation. In the former it is אות, in the latter σημειον.

Second, In what way were these censers, when converted into broad plates to cover the altar, a sign unto the children of Israel of the displeasure of Jehovah, against those who intruded into the office, that was peculiar to the sons of Aaron? how did they serve this purpose more than any other plates of the same metal? It was simply by the recollection of the occasion of their being thus employed. Whenever the origin of these plates being thus put on the altar was remembered, they would be a *sign*, a *token*, or *memorial* of the divine displeasure against iniquity. Now it is precisely in the same sense, I understand circumcision to be a token of God's covenant, or a seal of the righteousness of faith. It became such, *by the origin of the institution being recollected;* by its being remembered, that Abraham believed, and that circumcision was appointed a seal or memorial, that his faith was counted to him for righteousness. While circumcision was thus a token of that covenant in which this truth was exhibited, it became interesting to all, because it contained an ex-

hibition of the *general truth*, that whosoever believeth, his faith shall, in like manner, be imputed to him for righteousness.

I have only farther to notice, that this quite accords with the view given, both by Parkhurst and Buxtorf, of the use of the original word here used. The former thus explains its import. A *sign* or *token*, in general any thing that shows, or *causeth to come*, in the mind any other thing, whether *past* or future, which might not otherwise appear. Buxtorf's explanation of it is precisely to the same effect. "Signum quod eventurum aliquid portendit *vel aliquid in mentem vel memoriam venire facit.*"

I shall now leave you and your readers to judge how far this passage furnishes a confirmation of the view I have given in the volume referred to, of circumcision, not as a seal of some blessing to the individual circumcised, and independent of faith, but as a seal of this general truth, that whosoever believeth shall be justified by his faith, as Abraham was by his.

The volume to which these observations relate, is anonymous. The reason is partly given in the publication itself. My friend, Eugenio, who favoured me with the remarks that occurred to him on my reasoning, (and they were remarks stated in genuine conversations,) wished that no allusion whatever should be made to his name. An awkward mistake, however, has occurred in advertising these conversations on the cover of the Evangelical Magazine. While the advertisement mentions, that, among other topics contained in them, there will be found a particular examination of the evidence in support of proselyte baptism, especially as lately brought forward by Mr. Walker, of Dublin; it is so printed as to represent Mr. W. as the author of this publication. The more effectually to correct this mistake, and as it cannot interfere with the wishes of my friend, Eugenio, I take the liberty of substituting, in the room of Epenetus, the name of the author of his part, at least, in these conversations, while I beg leave to subscribe myself,

Yours, &c.

Edinburgh. WILLIAM INNES.

ORDINATION TO THE PASTORAL OFFICE, NECESSARY TO THE *Administration of the Lord's Supper.*

We have received a Query on the above subject, in which our correspondent mentions, that some young ministers, who have not received ordination, had administered the Lord's supper in a destitute church, where they were employed in preaching; and wishes to know, if this be consistent with the word of God.

The following letter to a young minister, from the late Mr. Fuller, in answer to a similar question, will, we hope, satisfy our correspondent.

"My dear brother,

"Relative to your question, I must say, it appears to me

very wrong, to administer the Lord's supper without ordination, as it goes to render void that ordinance. Ordination of elders, in every church, was a practice of the first churches, Acts, xiv. 23, and we should not make light of it. It is calculated to keep out unworthy characters from the churches.

"There was a Mr.——, that would have settled at ——, if we, as ministers, would have been at his ordination; but we knew the man to be of a bad character, and refused it. The consequence was, he stopped awhile, and then left, and went into ——, where he made great havock of some of their churches.

"Ordination seems originally intended for guarding against bad characters, 1 Tim. v. 22. I have, therefore, been much concerned, to see the practice of administering the Lord's supper obtain prior to it; which tends to set it aside; and will, I am persuaded, be a source of many mischiefs in the churches.

"I am told of a very respectable church, which has lately fallen a prey to a designing man, whom they have ordained. As none of the neighbouring ministers would attend, they determined to do without them. The consequence, I doubt not, will be mischiefs incalculable.—I do not suppose these would occur in your case; but you should not make light of an ordinance of Christ, and which, in other cases, may be of great importance.

"Affectionately

"your's,

Kettering, May 9, 1815. "A. FULLER."

ON THE DUTY OF A CHURCH TO *Partake of the Lord's Supper,* WHEN DESTITUTE OF A PASTOR.

To the Editors of the Baptist Magazine.

THE appearance of the Query, in your Magazine for April last, relative to "the duty of a church in reference to the Lord's supper, when their pastor is laid aside by affliction," was gratifying to many of your readers; but, I have observed, that the answer of T. F. published in the following month, has not had the effect of composing their minds. The conciseness of that reply, prevented the writer from paying much attention to the arguments employed by those who are of a different opinion.

It has been noticed, that those who think with Dr. Gill on this subject, generally make use of his observations in defence of their opinion; or, what, perhaps, is more common, content themselves with referring you to his "Body of Divinity,"* without presuming to discuss the subject. This has induced me to trouble you with a few remarks on the principal arguments that occur in the work already mentioned; for, much as I venerate that learned and indefatigable man, I cannot but consider it the duty of every person to think for himself. We are called upon to search the scriptures,

* Body of Div. vol. iii. p. 256.

and this should be done individually, with integrity and humility, looking up unto God, earnestly inquiring what is truth? The opinions of the best of men should ever be compared with the word of God, before we adopt them as our own; for the greatest of men are fallible, and their errors are dangerous, in proportion to their reputation and influence.

Dr. Gill, in the work referred to, after expressing the query, says, "As well may it be asked, Whether the Lord Mayor of London can exercise his power in the jurisdiction of the Mayor of York, or of Bristol," &c. Though it will be readily admitted, "no officer in a corporation can exercise his office in another corporation;" yet, it by no means follows, that a pastor cannot administer the ordinances in another church! The analogy between a corporate body and a church of Christ; between a mayor and a Christian pastor, is too faint to decide a Christian duty. The privileges of a corporate body, and the duties of its officers, are decided by certain human charters and laws, and the mayor cannot exercise his authority beyond the bounds prescribed in the charters and laws alluded to; but, he could, if it pleased those who have the power of granting charters and making laws so to allow. Thus, if it has pleased God not to prohibit the pastor of one church from administering the ordinances in another, whatever may be the restrictions of any civil officer is of no avail, the Christian pastor's conduct is by no means to be guided by such an inferior and imperfect example. Thus, if we allow, with the venerable Doctor, that a church of Christ "is a body corporate in a spiritual sense," it does not follow, that "its officers can only act as such within it and no other," unless it can be shown, that the *divine* laws, which regulate the duties of the officers in the church of Christ, exactly coincide with the *human* laws that regulate the duties of officers in a city or borough.

The fitness of things is a delicate and, perhaps, dangerous argument to apply in religious inquiry. Our discernment is so imperfect, our prejudices so strong, and our reason so perverted, that we are very apt to err in employing it; yet, if we might venture here to do so, it might be remarked, that there does not exist the same necessity for the officer of a body corporate being permitted to exercise his authority in another jurisdiction, as for a pastor to be privileged to administer this ordinance under peculiar circumstances, which is rather a benevolent than an authoritative act. The place of a civil officer is easily supplied; nor is the administration of justice impeded, or any material loss sustained by society on the removal of any officer. It is far otherwise in the church of Christ. It is often years before a successor is found to the pastor, and to suspend a positive ordinance of divine authority, without positive permission, but only upon implied, or conjectural evidence, is truly serious.

Our author next observes, that "a man can never act as a pastor, where he is not so much as a member; a man must be a member of a church before he can be a pastor of it, as we have seen." This is not only taking it for granted, that the administration of the ordinance, under consideration, is a pastoral act, (which remains to be proved,) but that it is a pastoral act confined to the pastor's particular flock; for if it is not a pastoral act, or though it should be found to be of that description, yet, if it be a *general* pastoral act, which the pastor is not restricted from performing as an act of ministerial kindness to a bereaved church, this observation has not the least force, and the allusion to a corporate body and its principal officer already noticed, will also, on this ground, be found of no avail. Under this head, Col. iv. 12. and Rom. xii. 4. are quoted, but they will be found to have no reference to the subject; indeed, the Doctor appears only to have quoted the former, to show what we have no inclination to doubt, that Epaphras was a member of the church at Colosse, and the latter, to prove, what we firmly believe, that "all members have not the same office."

It is next remarked, that, "As one that is not a member of a church cannot be an officer in it, as a pastor of another church cannot be; then he has no office relation to it, nor has he any office power in it, and, therefore, cannot exercise in it any act of office power; and, in consequence, cannot administer the Lord's supper in it, *which is an act of office power.*"

The force of this reasoning lies in the last few words, which, as they contain an *assertion*, unsupported by scriptural authority, should be carefully examined, and cautiously received. What proof have we, that the administration of the Lord's supper is an act of office power? Our author does not adduce one scripture in support of his assertion. The administration of an ordinance, so remarkably simple in its appearance, and devotional in its nature, can hardly be called an act of power; and even if it were allowed to be an act of pastoral power, there is no reason for limiting the pastor's performance of it to his own particular church. Exemplary piety, suitable gifts, and the invitation of a destitute church, seem to comprehend all that can be reasonably required in the administrator.

It is farther observed, "As well may he exercise other branches of his pastoral office as this; as well may he be a ruling elder, &c. and if he can act as a pastor in two churches, he may in ten, and twenty, and more, and so become a diocesan bishop; yea, a universal bishop, or pastor, as the pope at Rome pretends to be, &c. And it is an affectation in some to be thought of more moment and importance than they are; and to grasp at power and authority, and to appear in a character and figure which do not belong to them, if not something else, which tempts them

to give into such an unwarrantable practice." It is difficult, in controversy, to preserve that calmness of temper and determination of mind, that seem equally necessary to the investigation and support of truth. It is to be regretted, that a man, so justly celebrated, should have suffered himself here to be a little extravagant. To administer the ordinance of the supper, to be a ruling elder, to preside at church meetings, and to exercise every part of discipline, are certainly very different things, not equally expedient, nor convenient. When the Lord's supper is administered by another pastor, it is because the church is of opinion, that the administration of it is a pastoral act; or, at least, because the communicants prefer receiving it from the hands of a pastor. But this ministerial visit does not invest the kind pastor with any new authority, any more than my inviting, in case of necessity, a friend to do the honours of my table, would invest him, or her, with any prerogative to govern in my family. An equal need does not exist for presiding at church meetings, and exercising discipline; therefore, we very rarely observe such invitations given.

It may be doubted, whether it is quite consistent with that charity that "hopeth all things," &c. to question the motives of those worthy pastors, who can cheerfully administer the ordinance to another people. It is more than probable, that it is not affectation, nor a desire to grasp at power, nor a wish to appear in a character which does not belong to them, that induces them to accept the invitation of a destitute church, and preside at the table of the Lord; but a sincere regard for the commands of Christ, a desire to be of use to the church at large, and a readiness to oblige the household of faith.

The Doctor then proposes the following questions:—"Should it be asked, as it may be reasonably asked, by what authority they do this thing? Who or what gives them this authority? What answer can be returned? Will they say, they have their authority from Christ? To which he replies at considerable length. To follow him through his assertions, would be tedious and unnecessary; for many of the observations that would be made, have been anticipated in what has already been remarked. To the questions themselves, it may be briefly replied, that the authority is considered to be derived, primarily, from Christ; and, secondarily, from the destitute church that gives the *invitation*. Should it be said, the scriptures no where allow this authority, it is remarked, they no where prohibit it. The narratives of the commemoration of the Lord's supper are remarkably simple, and unaccompanied with those restrictions for which our author contends;* and, if our Lord has not prohibited the

* Matt. xxvi. 26.—Mark, xiv. 22.—Luke, xxii. 19, and xiv. 30.—Acts, xx. 7.—1 Cor. xi. 24, 25.

practice, and particularly pointed out the administrator, nor even hinted at such restrictions; nor the apostles, who were thoroughly acquainted with the duties of a Christian pastor, and who were likely, in some of their epistles, to have given such directions; it may be very properly inquired, why any one else should? The practice is evidently attended to, upon the same principle that induces other pastors to assist in the ordinance of baptism, and preaching the word; and it quite agrees with the benevolent and enlarged spirit, which the reception of the glorious gospel, under the Holy Spirit's influence, is calculated to promote. It is therefore considered, that a church has the power of inviting another pastor, rather than that the dying love of the Saviour should not be commemorated. The scriptures quoted by Dr. Gill, under this head, appear to have no allusion to the subject, Acts, xiv. 23.—There can be no doubt that the elders were ordained *for them*, and not others. Col. i. 7, that Epaphras was a faithful minister for the church *at Colosse*, particularly; but it does not follow, that his ministrations were confined to that church, Acts, xx. 28.—1 Peter, v. 2.—These exhortations to the elders, to feed the flocks, over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers, can hardly warrant our author's inference from these passages; "but not all the flocks over which they are not overseers; so other elders were directed to feed *the flock* that was amongst them, *not flocks*." This comment, in its strict observance, would terminate all exchange of services, and occasional ministrations. And what is then to become of that flock that has no overseer? Happy is that pastor, who, after having conscientiously fed his own flock, can, in the exercise of Christian love, extend his services to the utmost of his ability!

Our author proceeds to apply 1 Pet. iv. 15, to those who differ from him in this practice. He says, "Such who take upon them to act in such a manner, may be truly called busy bodies in other men's matters, or bishops in other dioceses." The exhortation of the apostle is excellent; but does it follow, because Peter exhorts, "Let none of you suffer as a busy body," that administering the ordinance to another church, constitutes such a character? Are those who so act likely to *suffer* in any respect? Far from it; they are likely to participate of that spiritual joy and satisfaction, which such an act of kindness, under the divine blessing, is calculated to diffuse through the whole family of the church. Nor can he be well called a busy body, who merely accedes to a respectful invitation; especially as, by so doing, he cannot interfere with the duties of any other person.

One should suppose, that the very nature of the engagement would shield from such an accusation. No secular concerns are attended to, no impertinent curiosity is indulged, no presuming behaviour. The service is composed of prayer,

praise, and showing forth the death of the ascended Saviour; and the minister afterwards retires to his more immediate connection.

It is farther affirmed, "As well may a deacon, of one church, officiate as such in another." This does not appear, for there cannot exist an equal necessity; and, therefore, we have no examples of such a practice in the history of our churches. There are, generally, several deacons in a church; and the duties of that office are not, therefore, interrupted by the removal of an individual; and, where there is but one in a church, his loss is generally *soon* supplied by another election: and, independently of this fact, we know of no duties, the deacon of one church could be called upon to discharge in another.

Finally, it is added, "No instance can be given of such a practice in the word of God. The instance of the apostle Paul's breaking bread to the disciples at Troas (supposing it to be understood of the ordinance of the supper) is no proof or example of such a practice, since he was an apostle." To which we may observe, there is no proof that he did it as an *apostolic* act. The precise circumstances of the church at Troas, we are unacquainted with. We are informed, Acts, xx. 7, that "when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them."—There is a probability, that the disciples would have broken bread, although Paul had not visited Troas. What if there is no *explicit* instance of the practice, there is no *implied* prohibition; and, certainly, a communicant, under such circumstances, need not fear drawing upon himself "the guilt of an unlawful administration." Under the former dispensation, the duties of the priesthood, with every particular relative to the rights and ceremonies of the church, were described with a minuteness, that does not characterize the descriptions of the New Testament ordinances, and the duties of those who are to administer them. And who has a right to prescribe limits and regulations, when the Holy Spirit has been silent?

From a dispassionate and serious view of the subject, there appear no reasons why we should hesitate in regarding the ordinance of the supper, even though we may be deprived of a pastor; nor does it seem greatly important, whether the administrator be a pastor, or some eminent saint in the church. But let us not dismiss the subject, without considering the effects likely to result from disregarding it.

Where this ordinance is discontinued, it will be seen, that the members consider themselves more at liberty to wander. In a numerous church, it can hardly be expected to see all its members together; but the occasion when most are seen, is the delightful ordinance, when the Saviour's dying love is commemorated, as most exert themselves to attend.—The neglect of any duty must have a serious effect on the mind; and it will be owing to

irresistible grace, if the importance of the ordinance is not undervalued in consequence; and it may be feared, that our gracious Lord, who is jealous of his honour, may resent such inattention to his commands, and withdraw the smiles of his face. Its observance is particularly calculated to preserve and promote Christian love and friendship. Meditating on what Christ has done and suffered for his church, its members will be likely to forget those trifling differences, and misunderstandings, by which the great enemy of souls seldom fails to agitate, and, oftentimes, rend the church. Indeed, it has been remarked, that destitute churches have been kept together from no other apparent cause.

Reader, search the scriptures. Accompany your readings with prayer; and when your heart is *most* filled "with joy and peace in believing," examine whether your objections are *strongest* to receiving this memorial of your Redeemer's love, from the hands of him, who, though his servant, may not be your pastor. Are your prejudices *then* so strong, and your scruples so numerous and powerful, as to make you reluctant to take the bread and wine from the hands of a godly minister, though pastor of another church, or a pious deacon belonging to your own?

Fear, lest while you endeavour to avoid inconsistency, you should commit sin; lest, while you "strain at a gnat, you swallow a camel." Is it not undeniably much more evident, that every church of Christ should, often and constantly, "show forth the Lord's death," than it is that the affliction or removal of their pastor, should suspend or supersede their compliance with a positive institution?

N. N.

ON SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES.

"True dignity and nobleness of spirit, greatly consist in an enlarged and unprejudiced mind; open to conviction, willing to investigate the truth, to examine the evidence adduced in support of men's opinions, and to treat religious inquiries with candour, seriousness, and diligence. Such an ingenuous and teachable disposition comes from above. They who possess it, will cautiously avoid a blind credulity, an obstinate bigotry, and a heedless conceited infidelity. They will receive the word of sober teachers with all readiness of mind; and, knowing their need of divine instruction, they will daily search the scriptures, to see whether things be so or not. They will gradually rectify their mistakes, obtain solutions of their difficulties, find answers to their objections, and be led into a solid understanding and firm belief of the gospel. But nothing can be more ignoble and base, than bigotry and persecution; and many, who appeared devout in their way, have been most inveterate against the truth, and most active in stirring up others to oppose it."

Prac. Ob. on Acts, xvii. 10—15.

Miscellanies.

SEQUEL TO THE "VISIT TO WATERLOO."*

TO THE EDITORS,

I HAD intended to confine myself, in this paper, to some remarks on the state of society in that part of the Netherlands through which I passed; but your juvenile readers will, probably, not be displeased to find these observations blended with occasional notices of the general appearance of the country, and of the principal objects which attract a traveller's attention.

Sailing early in the morning, from the Isle of Thanet, we lost sight of the North Foreland about noon, and soon after approached the coast of France, closely enough to look into the roads of Dunkirk, and to see, without the aid of a glass, the white flag which was flying on the steeple. A French lugger boat, with twelve men on board, crossed our stern, and the crew used very menacing gestures, but they did not molest us. At dusk we were within sight of Ostend, and came to anchor for the night in a calm sea; but, about midnight, a gale sprang up, which, for several hours, rendered the motion of the vessel distressingly violent. The next morning, an hour after sun rise, we entered with great rapidity the harbour of Ostend, which is chiefly formed by a vast wooden pier, stretching out more than half a mile into a boisterous and dangerous sea, and flanked by a battery of six heavy pieces of cannon. In a few minutes our vessel took her birth close in with the quay; and we were instantly surrounded by a motley group of custom-house officers, porters, and ragged boys, who addressed us in a jargon of tongues, some speaking the Flemish language, some broken English, and some the French;—the last of which I found to be the most convenient medium of intercourse, not only at Ostend, but in all the towns in the Netherlands.

Stepping for the first time on a foreign shore, I was conscious of feelings which I cannot well describe. The novelty of every object excited a high degree of interest, and irresistibly claimed investigation; yet caution restrained my eagerness, for the ground did not seem to be as firm under my feet as that which I had left: and the pleasing consciousness of safety to which I had been accustomed in my native land had, I found, in a great measure forsaken me. Advancing into the town, and growing more familiar with the scene, my attention was arrested at every step by ludicrous attempts at English inscriptions on the fronts of the houses, by the sight of women arrayed in tattered clothes and splendid necklaces, or of ostlers and postillions with gold rings dangling at their ears, while I had perpetually to repel some officious offer to direct me to an hotel,—so that I made but little progress for an hour after I had landed.

A gentleman of Ostend, to whom I had a letter of credit, introduced me to the commander of the garrison, who very politely granted me the necessary passports, and added to them some

* Baptist Magazine for September.

advice as to the manner of pursuing my journey. A number of Belgic recruits, training for the field, some English regiments just disembarked from the transports, and the vicinity of a large market, rendered the port and town of Ostend a very busy scene. Amidst the crowd I perceived a considerable number of persons walking in one direction; and, following their steps, I soon found myself in a large church, which was filled with disgusting images, enchanting pictures, and deluded worshippers. Around the exterior of the church, too, there is at every corner a crucifix, or an image of the Virgin, which receive far more attention from their votaries, than the British people pay to a religion infinitely more pure and exalted.

The town of Ostend has many marks of modern improvement in the streets, as well as around the harbour. These are chiefly the work of Napoleon; but a merchant assured me, that the heavy impositions necessary to defray the expense of these erections, had ruined most of the principal inhabitants. The canal to Bruges, an ancient and stupendous work, is filled at high-water to the level of the sea, and in it vessels of five or six hundred tons burden ride very commodiously. Along this canal a large passage boat, drawn by horses, passes to and from Bruges every evening; the distance is twelve miles, and the fare but a single franc for each person.

At Bruges, a city which appears much larger than Bristol, I paid as much attention to the elegant squares and public buildings, as a stay of ten or twelve hours would admit, and my trouble was well repaid. The great church exhibits a magnificence in its general structure, and an elegance in its statuary and paintings, which far exceed any thing I had before seen, and which I should admire in any place, but one that is professedly devoted to the worship of Jesus Christ. Such is the divine simplicity of his religion, that I believe it has never yet stooped to put on these meretricious ornaments. Had the author of "the Velvet Cushion" himself been with me during all the splendour of the evening service, I cannot say how much he might have admired "the trappings of the throne, or the curtains of the sanctuary:" but I think he must have exclaimed, "This, though it is the religion of cathedrals, is not the religion of the Son of God." I could see no traces of the second commandment in all the church. While, through all the city, I had inquired in vain for a Bible in the Flemish language,—while I looked into the Missals, and saw every word of them in a tongue unknown to the people, — while I beheld the crowds who entered the church crossing themselves with holy water, and bowing down to graven images, — while I surveyed on every side superbly painted windows and rows of tapers contrived to throw a "dim religious light" over the numerous congregation, I said, "Oh! that the Sun of Righteousness might arise upon them, with healing in his wings!" I fear I did not, on this occasion, pity the priests in their gorgeous apparel as much as I ought to have done; but certainly the people appeared to me like those who wandered on the mountains of Israel as "sheep without a shepherd;" or, as those among whom "grievous wolves had entered, devouring the flock."

On this occasion I was accompanied by a Graduate of a British University. Returning from the church, he said, "If I had not been brought up a Protestant, I think I should be of this religion; it is the finest,—it is the most solemn I ever saw." "Have you considered," said I, "that God is a spirit, and that none but that worship which is in spirit, the worship of the understanding and of the heart, can possibly please Him, or profit the worshipper?" "I confess," said he, "I have thought very little on the subject."

From Bruges to Ghent by the canal is twenty-four miles, through a flat and uninteresting country. A magnificent barge accommodates more than one hundred persons with a passage and an elegant dinner, served up on board, for the small sum of five francs each. On entering Ghent, which is considerably more extensive than Bruges, my attention was arrested by an air of majesty diffused over the principal parts of the city. The great height and extent of the dwelling houses well assort with the immensity of the public buildings; while large canals, introduced into the principal openings, add greatly to the grandeur of the scene. The largest church, which my guide called "L'Eglise Boven," has an exterior as imposing as that of Canterbury cathedral, and its interior is still more grand than that of the great church at Bruges. It is enriched by a profusion of sculpture, and paintings on scripture subjects by Flemish masters; a view of which has rendered me indifferent to almost all the exhibitions which I had been most accustomed to admire. There is a modern painting, "The Annunciation," by Lance, which would, I apprehend, lose nothing of its high estimation, if placed by the side of Mr. West's picture of "Christ rejected."

From Ghent to Brussels the country is highly cultivated, and the scenery is agreeably diversified by rising woodlands and elegant villas. The distance is thirty miles, and the usual conveyance is the public diligence, which greatly resembles in its appearance an English tilted waggon. It is drawn by five horses, and carries nine inside passengers, and three outside, seated in a cabriole, a kind of covered coach-box attached to the front. The fare is five francs and a half; and this sum entitled each of us to be miserably shaken on a paved road for nine hours, ere we arrived at the capital of Brabant.

Brussels is equal to Ghent in ancient grandeur, and in modern elegance it is far superior. Of the former, the great market-place and the town-house, with its lofty steeple, are instances which will attract the attention of every traveller: and the latter is displayed to great advantage in the superb square called "La Place Royale," the park and its surrounding buildings. The palace of Laken, the royal residence, about two miles from the city, well deserves a visit, for the beauty of its surrounding views as well as the extreme elegance of its furniture; but still more for the instruction which the mind receives by observing that there is not a cornice, or a table, or a chair, on which Napoleon has not fixed the imperial eagle. Will the present royal owner, I am ready to ask, suffer these memorials of folly and ambition to remain? Should he do this, it would, perhaps, display some greatness of mind, and tend to excite a belief that he may hold

the palace by a tenure less frail than that of its late possessor.

But Brussels, at this time, exhibited objects far more interesting to a thoughtful mind than royal palaces. On almost every door, through many of the largest streets, was inscribed the word "Blessés," (wounded,) "dix blessés," "quinze blessés," &c. These inscriptions were designed to guide the army surgeons in their morning walks. Eleven thousand of the brave men who had been wounded at Waterloo were then said to be in the city; and I learned from one of the surgeons that the cases were in general very severe, and the daily burials very numerous. I could not, however, find that my esteemed countrymen had any of those advantages of a religious nature, which their situation rendered so truly desirable; and it was distressing to me to observe, that multitudes who witnessed these afflictive scenes were themselves abandoned to despicable frivolity and dissipation.

Descriptions of the state of manners in Paris almost every one has read, and from these a pretty accurate idea may be formed of the levity which is diffused through the mass of society in Brussels, and which extends its influence to the neighbouring cities. In some instances *the men* discover a degree of natural thoughtfulness; but I searched in vain for that delicacy of manners which in Britain is the ornament of *female* society. In Brussels the women formed the great majority of every crowd: and while the countenances of the young appeared destitute of all care, those of the old proclaimed an absence of all dignity; in the one instance, "the wisdom that is from above" had impressed no restraint on native vanity; and in the other, the hope of immortality had communicated none of its elevation. To contemplate such society may be useful, to dwell in it would be miserable. "To wear out time, and waste the day," all ranks have recourse to amusement: music, dancing and cards are their perpetual employ.

At every hotel parties of musicians perform during the dinner, and perambulate the streets the rest of the day. I was attracted by the superior performance of one of these parties, and on a nearer approach I could see that it consisted of an elderly woman and two young persons, who were evidently her son and daughter: the latter displayed some sense of propriety, but the mother discovered none. The behaviour of several officers, to whom they were performing, soon forced me to retire; but such scenes and such parents were to be met with in every street.

Much that I saw at Brussels will not bear description: but a few additional remarks may impart useful knowledge to youth who travel, and to those under whose direction they are placed.

I had occasion to observe that, on the continent, the path to vice is, at its entrance, much less disgusting than it is in England, and on this account proportionably more ensnaring. A visitor from this country might be placed in the worst of company, while he had scarcely any suspicion of his danger; since there appears to be no visible boundary between the virtuous and the vicious parts of society, but both are perpetually blended under one general mask of easy politeness. It were better, surely, that wickedness should always wear her own garb, in order that the good might have warning

of her approach. Among a numerous company walking on the banks of a canal, I saw nothing offensive in the dress of the women, and, for a while, nothing censurable in their manners: but, when a company of officers appeared, I found, both to my surprise and regret, that a very large proportion of the company had disguised, under the most pleasing appearances, all that desolates virtuous society: and I saw, with still greater pain, that parents could continue for hours, with their sons and daughters by their side, unalarmed and unconcerned amidst scenes which must awfully pollute the early mind. Let British parents be careful how they unnecessarily expose their rising charge to these dangers; and let the young man, who would make this tour, be aware of the necessity of taking with him a wise counsellor and an obedient ear.

The facilities which are now afforded for visiting the Netherlands at a comparatively trifling expense, are strong inducements to the journey, and, under proper regulations, much useful knowledge may be gained by it, without incurring any considerable danger. The period, I hope, will arrive, though at present it is delayed by papal tyranny, when pious travellers will be permitted to use all those means for the moral improvement of the inhabitants, which have been so successful in other countries. I heartily wished for some religious tracts in the Flemish language; but I am not sure that it would have been wise or safe, in the present circumstances of the Netherlands, to attempt to distribute them. My doubts on this head are strengthened by the bold remonstrance which the Belgian bishops have, since that period, presented to the King of the Netherlands, against all attempts to introduce liberty of conscience into their provinces. These fetters must be broken; but it is improper to take the work out of those hands in which Divine Providence has placed it. May the name of William become as dear to the Netherlands, and for the same reason, as it has long been to Britain! I could not refrain, however, from conversing with some of the children and youth, whom I found greatly ignorant of the first principles of religious knowledge. I saw gratitude sparkling in the eye of some interesting lads, to whom I expressed my wishes that I had leave to instruct them. One of them followed me, in a most engaging manner, to the vessel, and took leave of me with peculiar affection. The streets of Bruges were full of these interesting objects: beholding them I exclaimed, "Happy England!"

I had almost forgotten to mention, that, through all the Netherlands, the people manifest the utmost contempt of the Sabbath. At Ghent, on that day, every place of amusement was crowded, the billiard-tables exposed to open view, and the streets full of stalls, as at a public fair. When I compared this contempt of divine ordinances with their strict observance of their own superstitious appointments, I said, "Full well ye reject the commandment of God that ye may keep your own tradition."

It is, indeed, abundantly evident, that "the god of this world hath blinded their eyes;" and, by polluting the only influence that could purify their hearts, has secured their allegiance to himself. What else can be the effect of a

system, in which confession to the priest secures absolution for every sin; and the repetition of a few prayers, in which the understanding has no share, and from which, therefore, the heart must be excluded, is the easy price paid for the assurance of freedom from all misery after death? Of the true nature of moral purity and felicity, the people are ignorant; nor is any one permitted to instruct them. They have no hope that can purify the soul; for, an escape from misery is the utmost height to which their hope aspires. They go from the pantomime to the mass, and from the mass to the pantomime, without being conscious of any abruptness in the transition, or of having, by their attendance on the one, incurred any unfitness for the other. Each is an affair of the senses, and both are performed with equal ease; so that the soul, without some aid superior to that which the papal religion affords, must be lost amidst the "deceivableness of unrighteousness." The Bible, that would undeceive them, is the dread of their spiritual rulers: but, I trust, "the day of their redemption draweth nigh."

On my return to England, a gale from the N. W. detained the vessel, for two nights at Ostend; and this delay afforded me an opportunity of seeing some thousands of the army, returned from America, disembarked. The sight was distressing; for, being supplied with spirituous liquors, by the suttlers, at a very low price, the men indulged to great excess; and, while I reflected with pleasure on their courage and patriotism, I sincerely regretted their impiety. If any consideration could reconcile me to a military life, it must be the permission to be chaplain to one of these regiments, and to attend my countrymen to the field, to teach them how to live, as well as how to die!

It may be easily supposed that I had not in this journey formed any good opinion of the dignity of human nature, or of the moral situation of man; yet a compassion for human woe, and a desire to administer to it the only remedy that can effect a cure, have never, I think, been half as strong in my mind as I now feel them. To create a missionary spirit, I would recommend a view of the internal state of those unhappy millions to whom the word of salvation has not yet been sent. The impressions thus received will be at once more vivid and more permanent than those which are received merely from the narration of others; yet, in the absence of such an opportunity, authentic descriptions of the present state of other nations cannot be too numerous or too frequently read: and if this communication shall contribute to awaken compassion for immortal souls, my labour will be well repaid.

In conclusion, I must remark, that, though I have always regarded with strong affection my native land, I was, comparatively speaking, a stranger to the feelings of gratitude to God for its transcendent mercies, till I had experienced this short suspension of their enjoyment. I now revolve in my mind with peculiar pleasure such scriptures as these: "Happy art thou, [O Britain!] He is thy shield and the sword of thy excellency." "Let thy way, O God, be known upon earth, and thy saving health among all nations!"

J. H.

Oxford, Oct. 9, 1815.

Obituary.

Mr. JOHN COOK,

SON OF JOHN AND ESTHER COOK,
Of Houndsditch,
Died June 10, 1815, aged 21.

From his diary it appears, that his first serious impressions were made at an annual meeting of young persons, four or five years ago, when an address was delivered from John, xxi. 15. "Lovest thou me." This, he says, set him on serious inquiry, and led him to earnest prayer, to know whether he loved the Lord or not. For a long time, previous to the affliction, which terminated in his dissolution, he experienced much darkness and distress of mind, from a discovery of the depravity of his nature, and most violent assaults of Satan, who was permitted to inject into his mind the most horrid and blasphemous suggestions through which he was deprived of both peace and hope for months together. At the commencement of the year 1814, he was taken unwell;—when the Summer was sufficiently advanced he was removed into the country, and though on his return he appeared much better, it was soon ascertained that no radical cure had been effected.

In the month of July, 1814, his brother put on Christ by profession, and united with the church in Little Alie-street, Goodman's Fields, of which his father has been for several years a much respected deacon. This circumstance of his brother's baptism made a strong impression on his mind; and though he desired it, he was not to be persuaded to walk in the same path, not being fully satisfied of his interest in divine love. After his return from the country he thus writes:

"I am returned from the country much better; may the Lord sanctify all his dealings to the good of my soul.—I have many fears about the root of the matter being in me, I am so carnal.—I fear my spot is not the spot of God's people. O Lord, search me and try me.—I am astonished at the Lord's forbearance, it is of his mercies I am not consumed!"

November 20.—"I hope I had some consolation to-day in hearing that the Lord will not suffer one of his little ones, that believe on him, to perish. I trust the Lord has begun his work on my soul:—may I be enabled to give him all the glory."

November 27.—I fear I have caused the Lord to frown on me, and leave me in darkness through disobeying his commands, in not attending to his ordinances; yet I fear to go forward, perhaps Satan presents some, if not all of these difficulties to my mind."

December 4.—"I am thinking about going before the church; but fear, when questioned about my experience, I should say more than I have felt; yet, though dark and doubting, I cannot give up my hope."

December 11.—"In the course of the last week I trust I have seen it to be both the Lord's will, and time, for me to obey his commands; something within says no, yet I feel as if I could delay no longer; I have been encouraged by Mr. S. and the messengers, and now I leave my case with God and them, pray-

ing that if I am deceived, or a deceiver, they may by all means reject me."

December 25th.—"On Thursday evening last myself and five more spoke before the church; I hope the Lord was with me; for while the exercise was distant, the mountain appeared large indeed; but, as I approached, it disappeared altogether; the Lord was better to me than my fears. I hope I had no other motive than his honour and glory.—Blessed be the name of the Lord, he now indulges me with liberty at a throne of grace."

January 7, 1815.—"I have this day professed my attachment to Christ, by following him through his watery grave, and felt some pleasure in so doing, knowing it to be his command. I have also to-day sat at the table of the Lord; but was I a spiritual partaker? I have many fears, but cannot give up my hope."

During his long affliction not a single murmur was heard from his lips; but he often expressed his sense of the goodness of God towards him. He was an example to those about him, saying but little, but always walking steadily, and spending all his leisure hours in devotion.

When first laid aside from business, he said, "I have got one step out of the world, and wish not to return. On the first Lord's day in March he communed at the Lord's table for the third and last time.—His medical attendant finding him much worse, gave up all hopes of his recovery: he replied, he could not have brought him better news, as he hoped he could say, "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly!" Speaking of death, he said, the sting is taken away.—When retiring to rest he often expressed a wish, if it were the Lord's will, that he might be gone before morning. On the day week before he died, he said, "this is my birth day; and if I should be taken to-day, it will be a happy day to me." Soon after, feeling himself worse, he said, "I am going, blessed Jesus come!"

On the evening prior to his departure, his mother said, "My dear child, you are going to heaven." He replied, "Do you think so? O happy change!" The last words that were distinctly heard, were, "Come, come, take, take." At half past one the following morning, his happy spirit departed to eternal rest.

His remains were deposited in Bunhill-fields; and, on Lord's day afternoon, June 25th, his pastor improved this painful event from Luke, v. 32, a scripture selected by himself for this purpose. Our departed friend was what he was by the grace of God.—In him we discover a deep conviction of human depravity; much jealousy of his own heart;—earnest desire to know his real character, and be saved from soul deception;—fearfulness of professing what he had not felt, and steadiness in maintaining what he did profess, relying alone on Christ for salvation.—His affliction was painful,—his race was short,—and his end was peace.

W S.

Mr. JAMES GIBSON,

One of the Pastors in the Baptist Church, in His Majesty's 24th Regiment, lately died at Dinapore, near Patna, in the East Indies.

The missionaries say, that "he has left a most pleasing testimony behind him to the praise of Divine Grace."

Review.

Fifteen Sermons on the most important Doctrines of the gospel; comprehending the privileges and duties connected with the belief of those doctrines. By J. Thornton. 4s.

THESE are most excellent sermons. For this opinion we give the following reasons:—They are evangelical in the highest degree.—They are very sensible, and uniformly so; as they do not contain a single observation that is silly or trifling.—They have an uniformly good tendency:—the style is neat and perpicuous, without being wanting in energy.—They abound with apt and very important citations from scripture, with useful anecdotes and sayings of wise and good men.—And they are of that kind which are most needed, being, as to style, subjects, and length, eminently adapted to be read in families on a Lord's day evening; or, in villages, where the preaching of the gospel cannot be obtained.—Minds, the most polished and extensively informed, will find nothing to disgust them; and the common people will understand the sense of our author without any difficulty.

Subjoined are a few specimens of the style and spirit of the work. We select the first from the 29th page of the second sermon.

"Now let me ask, do you come to the Bible for life, even the very life of your souls, which has been forfeited by sin? Are you impressed with the solemn conviction, that its doctrines and precepts require the heart, the whole heart? Are you fully and earnestly intent on the things which belong to your peace? Many persons now and then read over a psalm or a chapter in the greatest hurry and confusion, and are impatient to finish the task.—But is the duty of searching the scriptures performed when the book is laid aside? is there no need of application? is there no work for conscience to do, no treasure for memory to keep, no good for faith to receive, and meditation to digest?"

Our second specimen is taken from the 24th page of the same discourse.

"Life and immortality, so long hid beneath thick clouds of ignorance, are now brought to light by the gospel. Reason might balance opposite arguments, and yet hang in suspense, or waver in uncertainty. Fancy, finding a crude mass of fables, had power to embody them in a thousand pleasing, or terrific forms. But faith, aided by the gospel, beholds, as through a heavenly glass, things which to nature are invisible; faith, amidst all the noise and tumult of an evil world, distinctly hears the voice of the Almighty inviting the saints to a glorious city, an unfading paradise; faith, treading on the firm ground of the promise, and stretching out her hand beyond the limits of time, pierces the mysterious vail, and lays hold on eternal life."

Our last example is afforded by the final sermon, on the General Resurrection, page 271 of the volume.

"How are we bewildered and lost in contemplating the grandeur, and terror, and glory of the last day? For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God.—Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, and said, 'Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints; and when he appears, beside the spirits

of the just, myriads of bright angels will form the train of his attendants. Behold, he cometh with clouds, and his triumphal chariot, encircled with glory, rolls over the celestial plains! Hark! he speaks, and his voice penetrates the universe, while, at the same instant, the living are changed, and the dead raised. From the deep bed of the ocean, and the dark vault of the sepulchre, immense clouds hear the awakening call, and start to life.—The earth, which has become as one vast burying place, heaves with strong convulsions, and opens to set free the prisoners of death. All the tribes and nations of every age obey the powerful summons. Lo, millions of millions come forth from their grave to stand before the universal Judge, for every eye shall see him, and they also that pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him."

The Temptations of a Watering-Place, and the best Means of counteracting their Influence. A Sermon, preached at Union-street Chapel, Brighton, by John Styles, D. D.

It has been frequently lamented, that professors of religion, while spending a few of the summer weeks at a watering-place, for the purposes of recreation, or health, have, in many instances, stained their religious reputation by needless, if not criminal, conformities to its fashions and follies; though, in fact, no situation can be more favourable to the display of Christian character, none afford a better opportunity for the exemplification of those unearthly principles, and tendencies of mind, which ought ever to distinguish the disciple of Jesus Christ. Instead of manifesting that separation of spirit from the world, that disunion of heart from its vanities, that contempt of its glory, that abhorrence of its spirit, and that purity of character, which would mark the unchecked operation of christianity "in the inner man," too many have been seen, when thus situated, resigning themselves, without a struggle, to the solicitations of pleasure, and voluntarily descending, from the bold elevation of the Christian's enjoyments, to the grovelling meanness of the worldling's desires; till, at length, these essentially opposite beings have amalgamated, and every prominent feature of distinction has worn down to one common resemblance.

The author of this sermon, therefore, has chosen a very seasonable, and, if we consider the particular circumstances in which he is placed as a minister, a very necessary subject; while, in the discussion of it, he has appealed to the professors of religion, in many very suitable and excellent admonitions.

Though, however we are disposed to extol the laudable design and tendency of this performance, we consider it liable to some objections. There is too much of *effort* throughout; and the effect does not always seem proportionate to the *labour*. The author does not always appear to distinguish between *idleness* and *leisure*. The former necessarily implies moral culpability; while the latter derives its character only from the mode of its application to the purposes of good or evil. Neither are, properly speaking, temptations; and, certainly, not peculiar to a watering-place. He says, "The temptations of a place of fashionable resort, of course, affect those only, who, by profession, separate themselves from the world." How so? For, if fashionable visitors are the *tempters*, they are also *tempted*, in turn, to greater excesses; and, by this admission, the author has completely blunted one side of the double-edged sword, of

which his text put him in possession. What! are "the lovers of pleasure" to be allowed free pasturage in the fields of dissipation, in unmolested security, because they are greater violators of the moral law than others? It must have been an oversight, rather than a deliberate opinion.

Again, referring to the divine operations, as encouraged or repelled by the reception or rejection of the individual's mind, and state of feeling, it is said, "the Holy Spirit is infinitely delicate;" an expression which, we must confess, struck us as *infinitely* remote from propriety.

We are totally unable to subscribe to the sentiments expressed in p. 16 and 17, in which a comparison is drawn between the degree of evil in theatres and in the fashionable libraries of watering places, to the advantage of the former. In the first place, we are of opinion that the comparison itself tends to neutralize the feeling of disgust which ought to be excited against *all* public iniquities; for a depraved mind will avail itself of needless distinctions and niceties of calculation, by saying, "I do not frequent the libraries if I do the theatre;—I am not so bad as others." In the next place, we think that the author is not correct in his moral arithmetic: and we advise him to add the items up again and strike, as we think he must do, a different balance. It could not have been expected that the author of an "Essay on the Stage," would in any way have appeared to justify what he had in that work so properly condemned.

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1. *Reply to the Rev. Micaiah Towgood, upon Apostolic Tradition, in reference to Christian Baptism. By the late Rev. John Gill, D. D. With an Appendix by Joseph Ivimey. A new Edition. Recommended by several Baptist Ministers.*
2. *Dissertations on Christian Baptism. In which it is shown, that Antipædobaptism is in opposition to the Holy Scriptures, and the general Practice of the Church of Christ in all ages. By the late Rev. Micaiah Towgood. A new Edition. Recommended by several Ministers. To which are added, Notes and Illustrations.*
3. *Essay on Scripture Baptism. In which it is shown, that Infant Baptism is destitute of Proof, either from the Holy Scriptures, or from ancient Ecclesiastical Writers. By the late Rev. John Gill, D. D. To which is prefixed, An Address to the impartial Enquirer after Truth, &c.*

THE friends of what is called infant baptism, of late, have manifested an ardent desire to engage in controversy on that subject. It is not uncommon for warriors to recover of the wounds received in former combats, and to glance at defeats, long since received, only to feed the rising ardour for renewed exertions; and, therefore, we do not very much wonder, that a man could be found to republish the tract, to which that now before us is a reply. After its first appearance, Dr. Gill entered the field, and completely repelled the attack, so completely, that Mr. Towgood did not repeat his labours. As our opponents have republished, it is but fair that exertion should be met with exertion; and we have great pleasure in recommending Dr. Gill's Reply to Mr. Towgood's Dissertations on Christian Baptism, which may be had of Mr. Button, Paternoster-row. We think that every one, who is desirous of buying the truth, and who may peruse the Dissertations, should also read the Answer to them. If he only desires to continue quietly in his present opinion, he may act otherwise. As to our judgment of them, we have

no hesitation in declaring, that it is low indeed. They are on points which affect theology in general, awfully erroneous; and the title of the book, which asserts, that antipædobaptism is shown to be in opposition to the Holy Scriptures, and the general practice of the church of Christ in all ages, is so remarkably far from the truth, that we must be allowed to wonder, that men of repectability could recommend it to the public. We are not now to learn, that a spirit of bitterness against a doctrine, or a party, will, sometimes, induce an individual to oppose, in that instance, truth and righteousness; and, if he be active as well as violent, he may obtain, from very respectable men, who possess none of his gall, a kind of sanction to some of his deeds, or, at least, to the object which they were intended to attain. It is, however, our sincere desire, that the important subject of Christian baptism should always be investigated in the right way; not to favour our sentiments, but to obtain the truth concerning it; and we, therefore, most cordially recommend the following rules, according to which every work on baptism should proceed; they are taken from Foot's Letters, addressed to Bishop Hoadley:—1st. The receiving of baptism is not a duty of itself; or a duty apparent to us from the nature of things; but a duty, made such to Christians by the positive institution of Jesus Christ.—2dly. All positive duties, or duties made such by institution alone, depend entirely upon the will and declaration of the person who institutes or ordains them, with respect to the real design and end of them, and, consequently, to the due manner of performing them.—3dly. It is plain, therefore, that the nature, the design, and the due manner of receiving baptism, must, of necessity, depend upon what Jesus Christ, who instituted it, hath declared about it.—4thly. It cannot be doubted, that he himself sufficiently declared, to his first and immediate followers, the whole of what he designed should be understood by it, or implied in it.—5thly. It is of small importance, therefore, to Christians, to know what the many writers on this subject, since the time of the evangelists and apostles, have affirmed; much less can it be the duty of Christians to be guided by what any persons, by their own authority, or from their own imaginations, may teach concerning this duty.—6thly. The passages in the New Testament, which relate to this duty, and they alone, are the original accounts of the nature and end of this institution, and the only authentic declarations, upon which we, of later ages, can safely depend, being written by the immediate followers of our Lord; those who were witnesses themselves of the institution, or were instructed by those who were so, and join with them in delivering down one and the same account of this religious duty.

We now most solemnly declare, that, if the immersion of believers in Christ, were not, alone, Christian baptism, according to the canons just laid down, we would immediately reject it; and, if Mr. Towgood's sentiments would abide a fair examination according to them, we should immediately adopt them. But we have not the least doubt, that what is called infant baptism, is, according to the New Testament, without a shadow of evidence in its favour. Neither authentic histories nor divine revelation will favour the sentiments of the Dissertations. The

statements are unfair and inaccurate; the reasonings are bold, but remarkably inconclusive. The author first determines that his opinions are right, and then tortures, perhaps without knowing it, the sacred oracles to fit them. More loose, inaccurate, cloudy, and delusive interpretations of scripture, we have scarcely ever seen. We should tremble for the ark of God, if, on all points, the sacred testimonies were so used. Nothing would be more easy than to give specimens, for they abound in these "Dissertations;" but let the public judge, when they have read Mr. Towgood on one side, and Dr. Gill on the other.—We will give one example of the reasoning of this erroneous book; it is taken from the 12th and 13th pages:—

"Now, the same discourse of the apostle, which represents them (infants) as condemned and suffering through Adam, represents them also as justified and saved by Jesus Christ; for, 'as by the offence of one, (Adam,) judgment came upon all men to condemnation: even so, by the righteousness of one, (Christ,) the free gift came upon all men to justification of life; for as, by the disobedience of one, many were made sinners; so, by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous.'—As much as to say, the salutary effects of the second Adam's virtue, are as extensive as the penal ones of the first Adam's sin; or, as the malignity of that first offence reached even to infants, subjecting them to death; so, the benefits of Christ's obedience reaches also to infants: justifying, absolving, and restoring them to life."

Thus far Mr. Towgood; and he infers, from these premises, the right of infants to baptism.—We beg leave to remind the reader, that it is here asserted, 1st. That infants are condemned, and suffer through Adam. 2dly. That they are justified and saved by Jesus Christ; and these salutary effects of the second Adam's virtue, are as extensive as the penal ones of the first Adam's sin; that is, as it respects infants. 3dly. That infants, in consequence of this, should be baptized, as baptism is the emblem of giving and receiving this life-giving spirit.—We should be sorry to misrepresent any one; but, if we understand him, this is what our author has asserted. And here let it be remembered, that we have no doubt of the salvation of all infants, absolutely no doubt whatever. But we will examine this author, merely as it respects the argument for what is called infant baptism. We would ask three questions:—Does this salvation, this justification unto life, apply to all infants as they are born into the world, as much as condemnation and suffering do?—or, Does this great benefit apply only to all infants who die in infancy? or to the infants of believers only, who so die?—One of these must be admitted, to the exclusion of the rest.

1.—Does justification unto life apply to all infants, as they are born into the world, as much so as condemnation and suffering do? If so, then all the race of man must be saved,—for Adam's sin has actually brought suffering and death upon all;—and, if all infants who are born are actually blessed with the effects of justification, they must all be saved—not a child of Adam can be lost,—unless it be maintained that they are all actually justified and blessed with the consequences of it, but afterward lose these benefits and perish; which is in direct opposition to scripture, which connects together justification and future glory, Rom. viii. 30.

2.—Does this justification apply only to all infants who die in

infancy?—If so, then the infants of unbelievers are just in as good a situation as those of believers.—But, if so, what becomes of the argument for infant sprinkling, which is taken from the faith of parents?—If infants should be baptized because they are saved, and if all infants are saved, then all should be baptized, without any distinction. It is asserted in the Dissertations, in a note on the 15th page, 1. That God has been pleased to lay himself under a *more particular promise* of a resurrection to future happiness with respect to the infants of believers, while those of unbelievers are left more to his uncovenanted mercy. 2. That baptized children may be supposed to be in more happy circumstances in a future state than unbaptized ones. As to the first of these, we do not know what it means if it does not insinuate that, after all, we are not so certain of the future happiness of the dear infants of unbelievers, as we are of the felicity of the children of believers. The second point, which admits their future, but inferior happiness, we detest, as too much like the popish doctrine of merit, and, even supererogation, and destitute of the least scriptural proof.—Thus, this second question cannot be the meaning of the work before us.

3.—Does this justification unto life, apply only to the infants of believers who die in infancy?—If so, two things follow: the first chills our blood.—It is, that all the dying infants of unbelievers perish.—The second is, that it does not apply to those children of believers who grow up to adult age; and so, according to this, they should not be baptized till they have received justification unto life. This is only a specimen of the cloudy inaccurate reasoning of this pamphlet; and it is no mean argument against the cause it advocates, that even such a learned and acute man as Towgood could find no better evidence in its favour. To the work of Dr. Gill before us, an appendix is added, which contains valuable information, and completely refutes the confident assertions of that which is subjoined to the Dissertation:—"He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him."—It is our devout wish that the obedience of Christians to the ordinances of the gospel, should be holy and accurate; and, therefore, we most cordially unite with our respectable brethren, in recommending this scriptural and learned pamphlet.

The "Essay on Scripture Baptism," we perceive, is printed from Dr. Gill's Body of Divinity. This statement of our principles, having stood the test of half a century, requires no encomium from us. We were much pleased to find it printed in a separate form, and sold at sixpence; as but few persons, comparatively, can procure the work, of which it constitutes a part. The address, prefixed, contains some pointed observations upon the inconsistency of the reasoning in Mr. Towgood's work, with the principles of the ministers who have recommended it, considered both as Calvinists and Protestant dissenters.

We think the following paragraph deserves attention, as it proves how completely at variance pædobaptists, of different communions, and even of the same communion, are with each other, on the subject of scripture testimony in reference to infant baptism:—

"It is a little singular that, at the very time that congregational Pædobaptists are declaring that the practice of immersing professed believers has no support from the scriptures: yea, that *it is in direct opposition to them;* that a Roman Catholic Pædobaptist, the Rev. John Lingard, in his *Strictures on Dr. Marsh's comparative view of the churches of England and Rome,* contends, that there is no other foundation for infant baptism than *tradition,* on which the church of Rome founds the practice; that the church of England, in rejecting the authority of *tradition,* has no proper ground for baptizing infants. Mr. Lingard says, 'that the church of England teaches the validity of infant baptism because she speaks of such as receive baptism *rightly!*' Mr. Lingard, therefore, asks, 'But where did she learn this doctrine? *Certainly not from the scriptures: for it is not recorded in the scriptures: it could only be from tradition.*'

"Dr. Marsh, it seems, had observed, 'But our twenty-seventh article is so far from resting the practice of infant baptism on the authority of *tradition,* that it places the practice on a totally different footing. The baptism of young children, says the article, is in anywise to be retained in the church, as most agreeable to the institution of Christ.' To this, Mr. Lingard replies, 'This ought not to excite our surprise. It would, indeed, have been an extraordinary oversight in the founders of the modern church of England, if, after they had rejected tradition in their sixth article, they had appealed to its authority in the twenty-seventh. But men do not always act up to their professions. It may, at times, be convenient to say one thing and do another. They had agreed to retain infant baptism: it was, therefore, necessary to rest it on some ground. *On scripture they could not: for it is not taught in scripture.* The best expedient which remained, was to rest it on *its agreement with the institution of Christ.* But what is meant by this agreement? I regret that Dr. Marsh thought it foreign from his subject to explain it: to me, such an explanation seems absolutely necessary. Does it mean that Christ really instituted baptism? Then they must have learned it from *tradition.* Does it mean that, after considering the subject attentively, they think it most probable that infants were baptized? Then they acknowledge that a very important part of the doctrine of Christ is left *unrecorded in the scripture.*'

"The Baptists are really under great obligations to Mr. Lingard for defending them thus powerfully, though, doubtless, unintentionally! The celebrated lexicographer, *Johnson,* whom no one will suspect of an indifference to forms and ceremonies in religion, expressing himself concerning Roman Catholics, says, 'They may think that what is merely ritual deviations from the primitive mode, may be admitted upon the ground of convenience; and I think they are as well warranted to make this alteration, as we are to substitute *sprinkling* in the room of *ancient* baptism.'"

This Essay, with the address prefixed, is said to be published as an "*antidote*" to the "Dissertations of Mr. Towgood." Certainly, the unscriptural positions, erroneous statements, and unjust representations contained in that work, required such a powerful counteraction. We know of no tract more calculated for general circulation.

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

Preparing for Publication.

The best and most effectual Method of preaching Christ. A Discourse preached before the half-yearly association of the Hampshire Independent Churches, September 20, 1815, at Newport, Isle of Wight, by Thomas Durant Poole.

A Plea for Primitive Communion, occasioned by the Rev. Robert Hall's recent publication, entitled, Terms of Communion.

The Brothers; or, *Consequences;* or, A Story of what happens every Day; addressed to that most useful part of the community, the labouring poor.

Religious Books recently published.

An Account of the Life and Death of that excellent Minister of Christ, the Rev. Joseph Alleine, A. B. author of "An Alarm to the Unconverted," &c. and late Minister of the Gospel, at Taunton, in Somersetshire. Written by the Rev. Richard Baxter, his widow Mrs. Theodosia Alleine, and other persons.

The select Sermons of Martin Luther, the great Reformer, with his Life by Melancthon, and a full-length Portrait from the large German print, is just ready. One volume, octavo.

The Moral Tendencies of Knowledge: a Lecture, delivered before The City Philosophical Society, Dorset-street; and The Christian Philological Society, Spital-fields. By Thomas Williams.

Conversations on Matrimony, intended as an accompaniment to the Letters lately published, on the Duties, Advantages, Pleasures, and Sorrows of the Marriage State. By John Ovington.

Clavis Sinica; or, Elements of Chinese Grammar, with a Preliminary Dissertation on the Characters, and the Colloquial Mediums of the Chinese, and an Appendix, containing the TA, HYOH of Confucius, with a Translation. By J. Marshman, D. D. Printed at the Mission Press, Serampore, 1814, Quarto, pp. 622.

Dissent from the Established Church justified by an appeal to facts. By B. Brooks. Third edition.

Christian Baptism, a Sermon, preached in the Lal Bazar Chapel, Calcutta, on Lord's day, Sept. 27, 1812, previous to the administration of the Ordinance of Baptism. With many quotations from Pædobaptist authors. By Adoniram Judson, A. M. A few copies of this Sermon, delivered by Mr. Judson, on the day of his baptism, at Calcutta, may be had of Button and Son, Paternoster-row.

Mr. Rusher's Catalogue, which, besides a large collection in all the usual departments of Literature, contains a distinct class of more than a thousand articles, under the description of "eminent, curious, and rare."

First Annual Report of the Baptist Society in Ireland, with Appendix, containing Extracts of Correspondence, &c.&c.

Remarkable Sermons, by Rachel Baker, delivered during sleep; with devotional Exercises and Remarks, by Dr. Mitchell, and others.

Strictures of Eternal Import, and Universal Concern. By the Author of the Temple of Truth.

David Dreadnought, or, Nautical Tales and Adventures, in verse. By Samuel Whitchurch.

Sermons, designed chiefly for the use of villages and families. By Thornhill Kidd. Second edition, improved. Two volumes.

NOTICE.

We are desired to state, that the entire profits of the Memoirs of Mr. Fuller, preparing by Dr. Ryland, will be appropriated to Mr. Fuller's family; and also, that Dr. Ryland's is the *only* work, for which they have supplied the materials.

Missionary Retrospect, and Foreign Intelligence.

Letter from Mr. W. Carey, at Cutwa, to his aunts (his mother's sisters) at Hacklington, in Northamptonshire.

Cutwa, Jan. 8, 1815.

Our dear Aunts, *E. Old, J. Smith,* and *J. Timms,*

Having seen a letter from you, lately, to our dear father, we would avail ourselves of the pleasure of writing you a few lines. Although we are personally unknown, yet, I hope, our love to you, and all our dear relations in Europe, is warm and cordial. Notwithstanding we have not, and, by all appearances at present, shall not, have the pleasure of seeing either of you in this world, yet this is a great consolation, that we have a good hope, through grace, that we shall meet with you, and the rest of our dear relations, before the throne of God and the Lamb. You have heard often, no doubt, of the merciful dealings of God towards us, and all his dear people in this country of darkness. His glorious cause is going on, in a wonderful way, at Calcutta and Serampore, the seat of the missions,

and where father lives. The Lord is constantly adding to his church. Mission stations are fixed at many places, and the Lord has been pleased to do something at every one of them. Since the Lord has fixed us here, we have had the pleasure of seeing 23 or 24 baptized, and great numbers constantly have the word of life preached to them. Thus the Lord has appeared for his people and his cause. Since brother Felix has gone to Rangoon, his afflictions have been great and many. At first our very dear mother, and then his own wife, died, and another dear child of his; and now, at last, when he seemed to be settled again, the Lord has seen fit to take away his *all* in this world: as he was going to Ava, the vessel upset, and he lost his second wife and two sweet children. Thus the Lord was pleased to afflict him. O that it may be for his good!

Jabez is married, as you have heard I think, and is gone to Amboyna: he is getting on very well. Jonathan is at Calcutta, well. Please to accept of our united love, and give the same to all our dear relations. We shall be very glad to hear from you as often as you can find time to write to us. Hoping this will find you well, we remain,

Your's, affectionately,
W. CAREY,
M. CAREY.

PERSECUTION
OF THE
PROTESTANTS IN FRANCE.

THE following letter arrived at Fowey, in Cornwall, by a ship from the South of France, directed to the Rev. G. C. Smith, Penzance. The writer feared to sign his name and residence on account of the recent alarming events in that country. Inclosed in the same parcel, was a pamphlet, lately published by the pastor of a Protestant church, entitled "Defence of the Protestants of Languedoc:" several extracts from this book have been published in the daily papers.

SIR AND DEAR FRIEND,

I should have answered your interesting and friendly letter before, had I consulted the impulse of my heart, but, as the packet I have addressed to you, is too large to send by post, I have waited for a favourable opportunity to send it by sea.

Though you will receive this, written in a strange hand, I flatter myself you will easily conjecture the motive, and will discover, without difficulty, the author, by the sentiments and expressions it contains. Accept our best thanks for the interest you have taken in the young Timothy; we were much affected at the pleasure you expressed for his success in the schools at Paris, and the prayers you present for the favours of heaven on the object. Continue, my dear sir, to invoke the favour of him who is the "Father of every good and perfect gift," and the "God of all consolation." The prayers of our English brethren will be heard, and our young friend will obtain an abundance of that grace he so much needs in his present difficult and important situation. Indeed, he merits the love of all good men, from his assiduity and perseverance during the late terrible conflicts, so that he has not only survived the dreadful tempest, but comes out of it under the smiles of heaven, having now five schools in progress, assisted and patronized by your noble British and Foreign School Society. May the instruction of the Holy Spirit guide him through all his eventful labours.

Scarcely was Louis arrived, the second time, in the capital of his kingdom, when some wicked persons attempted to foment divisions between the Catholics and Protestants, who had, generally speaking, lived in the greatest harmony for many years. They began by spreading false alarms, and asserting the most infamous things, until they almost succeeded in making a general impression on the public mind, that the king would in future suffer no religion, but the Roman Catholic, to exist in France. You may form an idea of the terror this excited in the thousands of families whom the providence of God had again settled in this fine country since the revocation of the edict of Nantz. Our children, our property, our churches, and our local comforts all appeared at stake. Protestants trembled with dark suspicions concerning their neighbours, and the horrors of assassination, massacre, and expatriation were perpetually before our eyes, whether sleeping or waking. Superstition and fanaticism, taking advantage of this alarm, came forth from the tombs where they had lain concealed for twenty-five years; and, alas! were once more permitted, by a mysterious providence, to rekindle their expiring torches, and march through the kingdom, spreading terror and devastation on every hand. The south of France was soon thrown into the most horrible confusion; the old cry of enemies to Church and State, was revived; the Protestants were stigmatized as Be-

anapartists; and the most abandoned wretches, having branded them with an opprobrious name, conceived, that, by hunting them down with unabated cruelty, they should merit the name of Bourbonites, and make their slaughtered corpses, the stepping stones to favour and power, under the present dynasty.

To detail the base ingratitude, gross obscenity, disgusting superstition, and infernal cruelties, that have been practised, during this shocking attempt to exterminate the reformed churches from the soil of France would, under present circumstances, be as imprudent as unavailing. You will find, in the pamphlet accompanying this letter, some things that will shock the humanity of English bosoms.—Happy, happy Protestants of that favoured land—no rude mob shouts through your streets and villages, "Give us the blood of the Protestants; let us wash our hands in their blood;—*vive la St. Bartelimy!*" —May you long enjoy those privileges, communicating your principles and piety to every nation under the heavens. Nismes, that unfortunate city, where Protestants have so long flourished, to the grief of their enemies, has suffered dreadfully. Our ears have been assailed, and our souls wounded with the afflictive intelligence of butchered families, pillaged houses, wandering households, and churches burnt to the ground! O that such awful events may be sanctified to us all! Bourdeaux, where so many thousands of Protestants reside, has happily escaped the fury of the tempest. Toulouse and Montabon, where you have many friends, have not been greatly disturbed; we were much concerned for our University in the latter city, and especially for the promising youths there, who are training up as the future supplies of our churches. Mercy has indeed abounded in the midst of judgment. It is as melancholy as afflicting, to think that, under the reign of a sovereign so naturally mild as Louis XVIII. and within the reach of so many Protestant princes, who have twice placed the august family of the Bourbons on the throne of France; and that, in the 19th century, so many Protestants should have been pillaged and massacred, and the authors of those crimes allowed to triumph with impunity over the bleeding bodies of their innocent victims. Your countrymen will sympathize with, and pray for us. We do hope that the justice of Louis will yet bring to public condemnation the murderers of our brethren and the destroyers of our peace, though we pray with the martyred Jesus, in whose cause we have suffered, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do."

Many intelligent persons in this country had long feared that the influence the court of Rome appeared to possess, would produce some fatal consequences for the Protestant faith in this kingdom. The caresses of the Pope to our court have been too flattering and too reiterated not to be mistrusted. The artful politics of the Papal court have been well known; it seeks to gain by flattery to day those it had lost by tyranny yesterday: let us distrust the Greeks, and their fatal present. From the caresses of an enemy, every thing is to be feared. I feel happy to turn, from a subject so painful to my heart, to one much more agreeable to every feeling I possess, *viz.* the establishment of schools on the British system. We do indeed rejoice that the plans you first proposed to many of us in the South have succeeded so much beyond our most sanguine expectations. You have seen a report in our Moniteur presented to the Ex-emperor of two millions of poor untaught children to whom this system may be applied, with every prospect of success. France needs, above every thing, *education*. Without morals, without bibles, and almost without religion,—infidelity, superstition, and vice, easily bear down the feeble barriers the Protestants raise against them; and we are persuaded, that nothing will so effectually propagate light, and implant principles, as your excellent system in England. Were Frenchmen more enlightened, they would be better able to estimate the benefits of religion, and acknowledge the excellence of the gospel, and the value of true piety. O that the blessed epoch which shall introduce this dominion of the Redeemer may be speedily hastened! We look to Paris, full of hope; and, as our Sovereign has patronized the schools established there, we pray for that tranquillity which will justify a commencement in other parts of the country. Many of your countrymen have visited France; but it has been said in our social circles, that if a few of your rich and pious promoters of public institutions, were to visit our churches, particularly in the South, that their assiduity, humility, and zeal in the several duties of religion, would produce a wonderful effect on our infidel and superstitious neighbours. In admiring the piety of the English, they would, we trust, determine to imitate them, and we should have the satisfaction, like many other nations, of learning from Britain, how to live and act for God.

The example of persons eminent by their birth or fortune, would certainly be of great importance in a country like this. I have often thought that this

would be a most effectual means, by the blessing of the Almighty, of producing and establishing among us the reign of our Lord Jesus Christ; and many, many Protestants think with me. May not such an object be worthy of the zeal and piety that so eminently distinguish your privileged nation? Several persons desire their affectionate remembrance. May the favour of the Almighty rest on all your labours, especially those which aim to promote his glory in France.

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

By a letter from Mess. Schnarré and Rhenius, dated Tranquebar, Dec. 6, 1814, it appears, that they have fixed upon Madras as their station, and anticipate, in the occupation of it, a wide field of usefulness. They say, "From Madras, we humbly think, if the Lord graciously please, you may enlarge your wings to the north, to the west, and to the south."

LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

INCREASE OF THE CHURCH.

Extract of a letter from Mr. Read, dated Bethelsdorp, April 9, 1815.

"The work of conversion goes on rapidly. We can say, that, almost every day, souls are added to us. We trust in Christ that our enemies are curbed, and that the work spreads. YESTERDAY, ABOUT TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY WERE SITTING AROUND THE TABLE OF THE LORD!—Many, very many, with tears streaming down their cheeks, while receiving the emblems of Christ's body and blood."

Domestic Religious Intelligence.

BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

At the General Meeting of the Baptist Missionary Society, held at Northampton, Oct. 11, 1815,

After prayer, by Mr. Steadman, Tho. Potts, Esq. of Birmingham, was called to the chair,—on which, it was moved by Mr. Hinton, seconded by Mr. Steadman, and resolved unanimously,

1. That we deeply feel the loss which this society has sustained, by the death of its late inestimable secretary, the Rev. Andrew Fuller; and, by entering this resolution on our records, we are desirous of expressing our high veneration for his memory, our respectful sympathy with his afflicted family and friends, and our gratitude to God for the many and eminent services which he was enabled to render to this society, and to the general interests of religion.

On the motion of Mr. Roberts, seconded by Mr. Blundell, it was resolved unanimously,

2. That the thanks of the society be given to Mr. King, the treasurer, for his past services, and that he be requested to continue them another year.

It was moved by Dr. Ryland, seconded by Mr. King, and resolved unanimously,

3. That the thanks of the society be given to the committee for their services; and that the following brethren do constitute the committee for the year ensuing:

1.	Anderson, Rev. Chr.	Edinburgh.
2.	Barclay, Rev. Geo.	Kilwinning.
3.	Birt, Rev. Isaiah,	Birmingham.
4.	Blundell, Rev. Thos.	Northampton.
5.	Burls, William, Esq.	London.
6.	Coles, Rev. Thos.	Bourton.
7.	Cox, Rev. F. A.	Hackney.
8.	Deakin, James, Esq.	Glasgow.
9.	Dent, Mr. Joseph,	Milton.
10.	Dyer, Rev. J.	Reading.
11.	Fawcett, Rev. Dr	Halifax.
12.	Hall, Rev. Robt.	Leicester.
13.	Hall, Rev. John,	Kettering.
14.	Hall, Jos. Esq.	Northampton.
15.	Hobson, James,	Kettering.
16.	Hogg, Rev. Reynold,	Kimbolton.
17.	Hughes, Rev. Jos.	Battersea.
18	Ivimey, Rev. Jos.	London.
19.	Jarman, Rev. J.	Nottingham.
20.	Kinghorn, Rev. Jas.	Norwich.
21.	Lomax, Mr. James,	Nottingham.
22.	Morgan, Rev. T.	Birmingham.
23.	Newman, Rev. W.	Stepney.
24.	Nicholls, Rev. J.	Collingham.
25.	Page, Rev. Henry,	Bristol.
26.	Palmer, Rev. John,	Shrewsbury.
27.	Potts, Thos. Esq.	Birmingham.
28.	Ragsdell, Rev. W.	Thrapstone.
29.	Roberts, Rev. T.	Bristol.
30.	Saffery, Rev. John,	Salisbury.
31.	Steadman, Rev. W.	Bradford.
32.	Thomas, Rev. Micah,	Abergavenny.
33.	Wilks, Rev. Mark,	Norwich
34.	Wilson, Mr. W.	Olney.
35.	Yates, Mr. John,	Leicester.

On the motion of Mr. Robert Hall, seconded by Mr. Coles, it was resolved unanimously,

4. That our esteemed brother, Dr. Ryland, be requested to undertake the office of secretary for the year ensuing.

It was then moved by Dr. Ryland, seconded by Mr. Saffery, and resolved unanimously,

5. That the Rev. James Hinton, of Oxford, be requested to act as joint secretary with Dr. Ryland, for the year ensuing; and that they be empowered to procure what assistance in the office they may deem necessary, at the expense of the society.

On the motion of Mr. Newman, seconded by Mr. Page, it was resolved unanimously,

6. That it be referred to the committee to prepare a connected statement of the rules on which this society has hitherto acted, and to make such alterations as may be found necessary: the whole to be submitted to the next annual meeting.

It was moved by Mr. Birt, seconded by Mr. Kinghorn, and resolved unanimously,

7. That it be earnestly recommended to our brethren, throughout the kingdom, to form Assistant Societies, and to make annual congregational collections in aid of the society, as far as it may be found practicable.

On the motion of Mr. Timothy Thomas, seconded by Mr. Cox, it was resolved unanimously,

8. That the general meetings of the society be held, in future, at such places, in various parts of the kingdom, as may be fixed upon by the society at their previous annual meeting.

On the motion of Mr. Jarman, seconded by Mr. Morgan, it was resolved unanimously,

9. That T. Potts, Esq. of Birmingham, and J. C. Gotch, Esq. of Kettering, be requested to audit the treasurer's accounts.

It was moved by Mr. Roberts, seconded by Mr. Page, and resolved unanimously,

10. That the very cordial thanks of this society be presented to W. Burls, Esq. for the constant, valuable, and disinterested services which he has for many years past rendered to the Mission, and that he be requested to continue the same.

On the motion of Mr. Robert Hall, seconded by Mr. Reynold Hogg, it was resolved unanimously,

11. That the cordial thanks of this society be presented to the Rev. Christopher Anderson, of Edinburgh, for the many important services which he has rendered in various ways to the society, and that he also be requested to continue them.

It was moved by Mr. Ivimey, seconded by Mr. Saffery, and resolved unanimously,

12. That the next annual meeting of this society be held in Cannon-street, Birmingham, on the third Wednesday in October, 1816.

Mr. Potts having left the chair, it was taken by Mr. King; on which it was moved by Mr. Edmonds, of Cambridge, and seconded by Dr. Ryland, and resolved unanimously,

That the thanks of this meeting be given to Thos. Potts, Esq. for his able conduct in the chair; after which the meeting was closed with prayer by Mr. Edmonds, of Cambridge.

The public services commenced on Tuesday evening, October 10th, at six o'clock in the evening, at the meeting-house, College-lane. Mr. Page, of Bristol, preached from Matt. xii. 20, 21.

On Wednesday morning, at half past six, a prayer-meeting was held, to implore the special direction and blessing of God on the business of the Mission.

At half past 10, two sermons were preached by Mr. Roberts of Bristol, and Mr. Kinghorn of Norwich, from Mark, xvi. 16, and Isaiah, lv. 8, 9. The brethren who engaged in prayer, at the different meetings, were Messrs. Newman, Birt, Hogg, Edmonds, Coles, Ivimey, Saffery, Morgan, Hinton, Edmonds, junr. Nichols, and Ryland.

Extracts of Letters from one of the Readers of the Irish Testament, dated July 21st, 1815.

"----There is not a place, or part of the country, to which I have gone since my commencement, where I have read and spoke, however great the prejudices and hatred at first, that the people did not wish me to come again. Even in ——, where my brother told me they would dash out my brains, if I attempted to speak in that place: but it turned out quite contrary, as I never experienced more civility in any place I ever visited. By means of reading the Irish Testament, and explaining it, it is plain, that the Lord is bringing many, through every opposition, to make *open* profession of their love to the truth, and renunciation of their former errors; and very many do this *secretly*. So that, I hope, our labour is not in vain in the Lord. If you recollect, I once told you of a very wicked, desperate

man, who said, if he was sure he would be damned in hell to all eternity, that he would not change his religion. This man gave the family of —— more uneasiness than all in the country besides. The first time I went there to read, he heard me very patiently; the second, he clasped me about my neck and kissed me several times: but, to my surprise, this last time he mostly did not part with us at all; and when I was coming away, he asked me when I would be back again? I told him it would be long before I would go there again. He told me not to do so; but begged I would come often, and if not, that they would be down with me; and that it was better for me to come to them, than for a number to come down and eat my bread and potatoes! Here is a change; from the most determined hatred to the word, he now manifests the greatest love. But it would be tedious to mention all the instances of the work of the Lord (according to appearances) in these most unexpected parts. But you must recollect, there is a great difference between the people of England and the wild Irish here. Some that are true believers, and who, through grace, are enabled to make a clear confession of their faith, are disqualified from being either masters of schools, or readers of the scriptures. But blessed be the Lord, there are some who are qualified to become either, or both. I have already *three* schoolmasters in this part who are given me for my hire; and a fourth, who is lately brought out of the dark gulph of popery. These will satisfy you to heart's content, *viz.* —— who has a flourishing school of upwards of 100 scholars; —— the same; and —— the same. There is —— on the mountain side, who has a good school, which he has maintained most manfully against the greatest opposition in the kingdom; for, although I made the best interest in the country for his being supported against the opposition of the priests; yet if he himself had not persevered, all would have fallen to the ground. You are to observe, that wherever a school is established, there is an introduction for me to read and explain the word of God; without these it would be utterly impossible. I have had occasion to dismiss two of the Sunday readers, and to appoint two others in their stead. One of these is brother to the lad I met with on the mountains, whom I have under my care. There is also a converted man who lives at —— who reads the Irish Testament well, who is a miracle of grace: he never spoke a word of English; and, in the absence of —— will read to the neighbours. The progress of learning to read Irish is getting on so fast, that I hope we shall find many faithful men able to do the same; at least that there will not be an enemy to the gospel soon.

Your's, &c.

From the same, Aug. 21, 1815.

It is pleasing to see the flourishing state of the schools, particularly of those where the masters are themselves influenced by the truth. In five of the schools (costing each about twenty guineas per annum,) there are upwards of 600 scholars. These masters are not only teaching the children, but adults, and notwithstanding every opposition that can be made, was made by the priests, they are now actually dumb, and taking no heed. We are apprehensive that another storm is gathering; but the more they have as yet been opposed, the less respected are they even by those of their own profession. As for instance, in the place where the greatest struggle in the kingdom commenced, about a month since, the priest stood up upon the altar, and with great authority commanded his flock to return every Testament they had in their possession: and said that he had as great authority on that altar, as God had on his throne in heaven. The only effect produced was, that a man and his wife went out of the chapel, and have declared they will never enter it again: not one Testament was given up. The next sabbath, at another part of the parish, as this had failed, he stood up, and wept bitterly that his flock was likely to be destroyed; but no heed was given to him; and there

never was so great demand for Testaments, from all parts, as since that time. Generally speaking, the Lord is exciting a great spirit of inquiry; *but there are so few that can speak to the people in IRISH: and any thing else is useless!*—I intend to go soon to the —— Mountains, partly in the counties of Sligo and Roscommon. I have received a kind invitation from an ancient man, that I had not seen for twenty years before last week; who pressed me to come where he lives, and bring the Irish Testament with me: this I cannot omit. I had not intended to visit this place till I met with this old acquaintance. We shall now compass a large tract of country. I shall extend my labours to the East —— to the South. I hope —— will be appointed for the West; there is no man the Lord has fitted better for this purpose; he is as mild as a lamb, and as stout as a lion; and there is no disturbing him in his temper, by any means whatever; and he ventures to go, where either of us would be too timorous to go at all. Mr. B. has appointed —— long ago to go to the North.

We are happy to find that, at the annual association of the Baptist churches in Ireland, held at Cork, on May 12, 1815, some very important regulations were adopted, which we doubt not will prove advantageous. A more particular account of this meeting may be expected in our next.

NEW CHAPELS OPENED.

RATTLESDEN.

The Baptist meeting house at Rattlesden having been greatly enlarged, it was re-opened on Tuesday, the 1st of August. The Rev. T. C. Edmonds, M. A. of Cambridge, preached from Psalm l. 2. "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." The Rev. J. Smith, of Ilford, from John, iii. 30. "He must increase." And the Rev. W. Weare, of Ipswich, from 1 Cor. i. 21. The devotional services were conducted by the Rev. Mess. Cole, of Bury; Thompson, of Grundisburgh; Weare and Paine, of Ipswich; Cox, (independent,) of Hadleigh; Brown and Bloomfield, of Stowmarket; and Tipper, of Otley.

MILDENHALL.

A new meeting house, at West Row, Mildenhall, (for the Baptist congregation in that place,) was opened in March.—The Rev. Mr. Keeble, of Blandford-street, London, preached from 1 Cor. xvi. 13, 14. The Rev. Mr. Stodhart, of Pell-street, London, from Prov. xviii. 24. And the Rev. Mr. Paine, of Ipswich, from John, iii. 16. The Rev. Mess. Cole, of Bury; Norman, of Soham; and Middleditch, of Rattlesden, assisted in the devotional services.

NOTTINGHAM.

On Wednesday, Aug. 16, a large and commodious Baptist meeting house, lately erected in George-street, Nottingham, was opened for divine worship. The Rev. Thomas Morgan, and the Rev. Isaiah Birt, of Birmingham, preached in the morning; and the Rev. Thomas Roberts, of Bristol, in the evening. The collections toward defraying the expenses of the erection (including those made after two sermons preached by Mr. Roberts, on the following Lord's day) amounted to £317 15s.

KEIGHLEY.

On March 29, 1815, a new chapel was opened at Keighley, in the West of Yorkshire, of the Baptist denomination. In the morning Mr. Trickett, of Bramley, introduced divine worship by reading the scriptures, and prayer. Mr. Stephens, of Manchester, preached from Psalm cxxxii. 18. Mr. Lister, of Liverpool, then preached from 2 Cor. iii. 8, and concluded. In the afternoon Mr. M'Farlane, of Rawdon, began divine worship by prayer. Mr. Mann, of Shipley, preached from Haggai, ii. 7.; and Mr. Steadman, of Bradford, from Micah, vii. 20, and concluded. An interest was set on foot here, five or six years ago, by a few individuals who were members of the Baptist Church at Haworth, a village about three miles from Keighley. Since that time, Mr. Joseph Shaw has been invited to labour there. A church has been formed consisting of eighteen members. The place will seat about 500 hearers, and is yet encumbered with considerable debt; for the liquidating of which, application must be made to the churches of Christ, around. Keighley is a considerable market town; and the interest has long been in a very low state indeed there; every effort made to encourage it there is highly deserving the patronage of the Christian public.

ORDINATIONS.

GREAT DRIFFIELD.

Mr. James Normanton was ordained pastor of the Baptist church at Great Driffield, Yorkshire, on the 28th of June. Mr. Arbon, of Hull, commenced the service of the day with reading. Mr. Burry, of Bishop-Burton, prayed. Mr. Harness, of Bridlington, delivered the introductory discourse, and asked the questions. Mr. Pilling, of Goodshaw chapel, Lancashire, offered the ordination prayer, and gave the charge to the minister from Isaiah, lxii. 6. Mr. Arbon addressed the church from 1 Thes. v. 25. Mr. Burry preached, in the evening, from John, xxiii. 16.

CHIPPING, SUDBURY.

August 23, the Rev. Ezra Horlick, from the Bristol Academy, was set apart to the pastoral office over the Baptist Church at Chipping Sudbury, Gloucestershire; Mr. Griffiths, of Wooton-under-edge, began the services by reading and prayer; Mr. Vernon, of Downend, delivered the introductory address, asked the questions, and received Mr. Horlick's confession of faith; Mr. Porter, of Bath, offered up the ordination prayer, with laying on of hands; Dr. Ryland gave the charge, from Jeremiah, xxiii. 22; Mr. Porter addressed the people, from 1 Peter, ii. 5; and Opie Smith, Esq. of Bath, concluded in prayer. Dr. Ryland preached, in the evening, from Acts, xxvii. 23, latter part.

DESIGNATION OF A MISSIONARY.

Mr. Lee Compeer, a Baptist Missionary, about to proceed to the West Indies, to instruct the slaves upon the estate of a humane and benevolent gentleman, was publicly set apart to that work on Wednesday evening, Oct. 18, at Mr. Shenstone's meeting, Little Ailie-street, London. Mr. King, of Halsted, (Mr. Compeer's pastor) began the service by reading the scriptures, and prayer. Mr. Ivimey delivered an introductory discourse upon the importance of missions to the heathen, founded upon 1 John, v. 19.; asked Mr. Compeer the usual questions, and received his answers. Mr. Roberts, of Bristol, prayed for the missionary, accompanied by imposition of hands. Dr. Ryland, of Bristol, delivered a solemn and instructive charge from 1 Cor. ix. 19, 22, 23. Mr. Shenstone concluded in prayer, after presenting Mr. and Mrs. Compeer, each, with a Bible; the former, from the children belonging to the Sunday school at Halsted, as a tribute of respect to Mr. Compeer, who had been one of their teachers; requesting him to employ it for the use of the negro children of his congregation.

ASSOCIATION.

BECKINGTON.

The Wilts and Somerset half-yearly association was held at Beckington, Sept. 26. Brother Ayres, of Keynsham, preached in the morning, from 2 Tim. ii. 10. Brother Macfarlane (who is supplying at Trowbridge) in the afternoon, from Psalm lxxxix. 15. Brother Dear, of Paulton, in the evening, from 2 Cor. v. 20. Brethren Philips, Robarts, Parsons, Edminson, and Seymour, engaged in the other services. After each sermon, a collection was made for the encouragement of village preaching. The next association is to be held at Crockerton, on the last Tuesday in April, 1816. Brother Edminson is appointed to preach.

ASSISTANT MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

HANTS AND WILTS.

July 19, the churches of Hants and Wilts, composing the Assistant Missionary Society for those counties, held their second Meeting at Downton. The brethren Bulgin, Russell, Miall, and Giles preached appropriate sermons. The devotional parts of the services were conducted by the brethren, Dore, Roberts, Miall, Tilly, Saffrey, and Giles. A collection was made in aid of village preaching.

Poetry.

A THOUGHT OF DEATH AND HEAVEN.

Swift as my fleeting days decline,
The final hour draws nigh,
When, from the busy scenes of time,
I must retire and die!

O! may this solemn thought pervade
And penetrate my soul!
Govern my life through ev'ry stage,
And all my pow'rs control!

Lord, draw thine image on my heart,
And show my sins forgiv'n;
And all that holiness impart
Which fits the soul for heav'n!

Then welcome the kind hour of death,
That ends this painful strife!
The hand that stops this mortal breath,
Will give eternal life!

G. B.

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